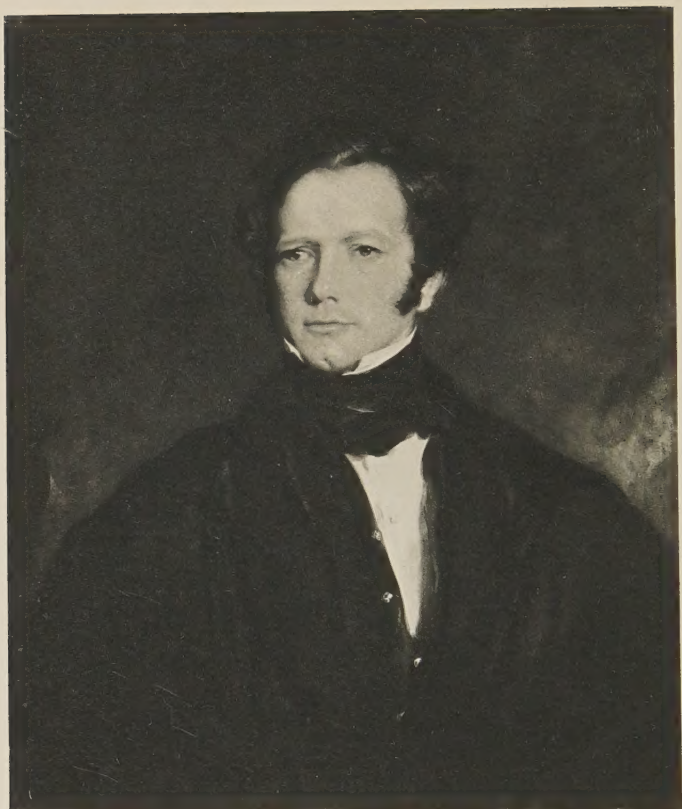


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PETER SIMPLE

*This edition is limited to
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and America*



Captain Marryat, R.N.

*from the Portrait by
John Simpson
in the National Portrait Gallery.*

PETER SIMPLE

BY

CAPTAIN MARRYAT

WITH A PORTRAIT AFTER

JOHN SIMPSON

TWENTY-ONE COLLOTYPE PLATES OF

ETCHINGS AND DRAWINGS BY

R. W. BUSS

AND

A BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

BY

MICHAEL SADLEIR

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME ONE

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BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.

Peter Simple, after running serially in the *Metropolitan Magazine* from June 1832 to December 1833, was published by Saunders & Otley in three volumes in 1834.

In January 1837 an illustrated edition was issued containing twelve etchings by R. W. Buss. Not only the plates to this edition are here reproduced, but also the binding design—one of exceptional beauty and without parallel in the binding history of its period.

Whether the nine hitherto *unpublished* illustrations herein also included were (as one would naturally assume) trial designs rejected by the publishers, is open to question. It is possible that they represent attempts to carry out rough sketches by Marryat himself, and in consequence are of earlier date than the dozen engravings finally adopted. This theory is supported by a MS. note in the possession of the Buss family which records the artist's own version of the history of this illustrated *Peter Simple*. R. W. Buss is stated to have said : 'The outline to *Peter Simple* originated thus. Count D'Orsay employed artists to work up his slight drawings and pictures. From this a fashion arose of authors illustrating their own works. Thackeray did this ; Marryat attempted it, persuading his friend, Stanfield the R.A., to retouch his designs. These were handed to me for completion and etching. After a while Stanfield tired of the job, and the illustrations were handed over to me. Five or six subjects were thus prepared to be published as illustrations by the Captain. The etchings of *Peter Simple* are more highly finished than my other etchings in compliance with the request of Mr. Colburn, who wished them to be an imitation of line-engraving.'

MARRYAT : A PORTRAIT

By MICHAEL SADLEIR

I

It is strangely difficult to recreate the being that was Frederick Marryat. As schoolboy rowdy, playing tricks on ushers ; as eager truant, haunting the docks and riverside that lay so near his early home ; as midshipman or wildly brave lieutenant or tireless, rather boastful captain ; as busy novelist or harassed editor or dissipated buck ; even, in the short peaceful autumn of his days, as kindly, pious but despotic father, Marryat, for ever tantalising, seems to elude a curious posterity.

Nearly he springs to vivid life at every stage of his brief, crowded and adventurous career. Yet, just as imagination grasps after the promised vision, he fades into uncertainty again ; and we are left to deplore that the precious evidence we so much need is now, alas, lost irretrievably.

We know that he was born in 1792, in Catherine Court near the Tower of London ; that in Blackfriars he lived his boyhood through. We may surmise the influence on his young mind of wharves and merchant ships, of Trinity House and of the old Navy Office ; for thrice

he ran away from school to sea, before his father, bowing to the inevitable, got him a berth as midshipman, and saw him sail away—a scrap but fourteen years of age—under Lord Cochrane in the *Impérieuse*.¹ We can picture him one of a teeming family ; hating the clothes cut down, by some queer impulse of economy in a home otherwise lavish enough, from the more lanky figure of his elder brother ; teasing his sisters ; spending the money given for return to school in standing treat to other urchins at the theatre.

But beyond some such general vision of his boyhood we struggle vainly to advance. Surely the household of Joseph Marryat, Esquire, and of his Bostonian garden-loving wife must have had definite qualities of its own—qualities of thoughtfulness or luxury, of love or tyranny, of humour, of political discussion ? Joseph Marryat was a wealthy man, head of a banking house and chairman of Lloyds. With his knowledge of West Indian trade and, as colonial agent for Trinidad and Grenada, he must have been in touch with public happening and distinguished men. Later, he entered the House of Commons as member for Horsham ; later still, for Sandwich ; and his speeches against slave-grown sugar, which, incidentally, damaged the

¹ Lord Cochrane was the original of ‘ Captain Savage ’ in this novel, *Peter Simple*.

value of his own properties, were much applauded, printed in pamphlet form and widely read. Near the end of his life he was offered a baronetcy, but refused it. Surely it is strange that of such a father we should glean no personal knowledge whatsoever from the acute and candid writings of his son ?

It is often assumed that, because Frederick Marryat wrote little in description of his childhood, because in several of his books the hero's parents are presented as grotesque or violent with their children, he was himself unhappy as a boy. Maybe ; but the unhappiness was as likely due to his own temperament as to mis-handling by his elders. Throughout his life he showed from time to time a strain of rather peevish vanity which is the more observable for its strong contrast to his other qualities of courage and broad-minded humour. He was, in all probability, a difficult and thankless child—turbulent, but at the same time clever almost to slyness ; generous, but often vengeful ; as heedless of the feelings and comfort of others as of his own.

His record, during his nine years' service as midshipman and as lieutenant before the general peace that followed Waterloo, is one of hard work and of distinguished gallantry. Again and again during those years he risked his life to save a drowning shipmate ; in every

engagement, whether on land or sea, he acted with bravery and self-forgetfulness.¹

And yet, when one reads his first book, *The Naval Officer*, one is not quite convinced by his later declaration that, while the adventures of Frank Mildmay were indeed actual experiences, the character of that young ne'er-do-well was in no sense the character of his creator. Mildmay's irregular morality may be passed over : such dissipations are nowadays no commoner than before, but they are less mulishly denied. The qualities of Marryat's first hero which force themselves upon reluctant notice are of a different kind. Mildmay is callous and selfish ; addicted to ingenious intrigue in his own interest ; a brilliant schemer ; an improviser of ways of escape from consequences of his own ill-doing ; consciously insincere where insincerity is seen to promise benefits ; and, above all, utterly candid about himself, and impudently aware of his own deliberate imperfections.²

¹ His services did not at that time go unrecognised. Lord Cochrane's account of the storming of the fortress of Rosas in December, 1808, makes special mention of ' Midshipman Marryat,' and he was officially thanked by the Royal Humane Society in 1818 for his attempts to save life at sea. Other interesting details of Marryat's youthful career and achievements are given by Sir Chartres Biron in an excellent essay published in *Pious Opinions*. (London : Duckworth, 1923.)

² A not dissimilar slyness characterises the hero of

Of such a catalogue of frailties Marryat cannot on any grounds be accused. But if it is not possible to argue that he himself possessed the qualities of his first novel's hero, it is equally impossible to maintain that he did not.

There is no intention of disparaging Marryat by this suggestion. He insisted throughout his life on the importance of facing facts and meeting difficulties half-way, so that one may be sure he would not wish to be himself remembered for other than he was. His daughter's tribute,¹ for all the interest of the material it embodies, loses vigour and precision in its very evident discretion. Filial piety may hinder rather than advance an ultimate repute ; and it has certainly been to Marryat's disadvantage that no salient picture of what must have been an emphatic and pungent personality has been left for posterity by those who knew him best.

His portraits show him fresh-coloured, with open, clear-cut features, bold lively eyes and a strong chin deeply cleft. He was of middle height, sturdily built and of great muscular strength. The rupture of blood vessels, from which ultimately he died, had since early manhood been his most serious physical weakness,

Percival Keene (1842), which novel in more than one way recalls the Marryat of a decade earlier.

¹ *Life and Letters of Captain Marryat*, by Florence Marryat, 2 vols. 1872.

and there can be no doubt that the hardships he endured and the reckless life that he preferred intensified the risks of this complaint.

The severities of the service at the time of Marryat's initiation need not be dwelt upon. It is sufficient to read his own early books, or those of Captain Basil Hall, Captain Glascock, or of Captain Chamier,¹ or that very remarkable autobiography of Pemberton's *Pel Verjuice*² (perhaps the most striking evidence of all, seeing that it was written from the viewpoint of the ordinary seaman and not of midshipman or officer), to understand that only boys of physical strength, of resource and of courage could have suffered the ordeal. Marryat, it may safely be surmised, had enough of strength, too much of resource and all that is possible of courage. He seems to have thrown himself into a sailor's life with something of the reckless, insensitive bravado that characterises his novels. Where an oppressor could with prospects of success be met in open combat, Marryat so met him ; where, for one reason or another, guile and the aid of others became necessary allies,

¹ Cf. *Naval Officer*, early chapters ; Basil Hall : *Fragments of Voyages and Travels*, 1831, vol. i. ; Glascock : *Naval Sketch Book*, 1826 ; *Tales of a Tar*, 1830 ; Frederick Chamier : *The Life of a Sailor*, 1834 ; *Ben Brace*, 1835, etc.

² Recently (1929) republished by the Scholartis Press, with a preface by Eric Partridge.

Marryat plotted and found adherents and achieved revenge.

Frank Mildmay's violent progress to the cockship of the midshipmen's walk was (with sufficient certainty) Marryat's own ; coloured maybe with the rosy mists of memory, but, for all its vainglorious embellishment, substantially a tale of fact.

To find fault with Marryat for a blindness to the finer shades of human relationships were pedantry. The boys, with whom on frigate, flagship and sloop he lived in boisterous competition, saw life in broad outline and a little brutally. Each was for self, save within certain traditional limits of honour and comradeship. Captains and first and second officers were despots and often cruel despots. To flout authority or cheat a tyrant of his prey became, and naturally, the duty of a midshipman.

But because Marryat had a mind more complex and more skilful than the majority of his fellows, he reacted in a manner peculiarly his own to the atmosphere so strangely blent of blows and kindness, of drink and daring, of rigid honour and of private lies, of rough generosity and of callousness, which pervaded the navy of his time.

In matters of naval tactics and policy he became liberal and aggressively outspoken. He condemned waste of life in action on sea or

land—an attitude that to-day seems commonplace, but needed courage to maintain at a time when a commander could reckon the value of an engagement as much in terms of losses suffered on board his own ship as by the number of casualties inflicted on the enemy.

Again and again he shows in his books a horror at the brutal floggings to which some captains were deliberately inclined. Again and again also, he attacks the system of impressment, not only as itself a barbarism, but also as in the worst interests of the very service it was instituted to benefit.¹

His obstinate hostility to the press gang found expression in a pamphlet on the subject (which, incidentally, lost him the favour of William IV. and destroyed an otherwise certain chance of promotion and enrichment) and also made itself very evident in three at least of his novels. In 1833 he stood as Reform candidate for Parliament, fighting Tower Hamlets at a

¹ In its failure to give Marryat credit for a humanitarianism at once sincere, self-damaging and very rare at the time, Pemberton's *Pel Verjuice* (above referred to) is guilty of an injustice very characteristic of the agitator-mind. Attacking the naval writers of the thirties, Pemberton includes Marryat in a general assault on the callous jollity with which sailors and life at sea were conventionally treated, implying that as an officer he was no less indifferent than the others of his class to the sufferings of his inferiors.

cost of £7000. Abolition of impressment was one of the planks of his platform and, likely enough, contributed something to his defeat.

On the slave trade his views were equally enlightened and humane. In several of his books he takes occasion to show his hatred of the traffic in helpless human beings. Mesty, the too marvellous negro in *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, is in himself an expression of the novelist's respect for the capacity of native races and a gesture against their oppression.

This would be a remarkable record for any man of the time ; for a naval officer it is amazing. Sir Chartres Biron, in the essay above referred to, aptly quotes words written by Marryat about Lord Napier, and applies them to their writer: 'In the midst of tyranny he set the example of mercy ; in the midst of ignorance he was learned and scientific . . . One of the best seamen and best officers in His Majesty's service.'

But if the fineness of Marryat could so react against the injustices and cruelties witnessed at sea as to force him publicly into defiant humanitarianism, he did not in other ways escape their coarsening influence. His power for laughter must always have been great ; and in that laughter, as we hear it in his books, there is a note of brutality which can easily be accounted for, if we imagine him arming his

sensibilities against the shock of their surroundings with the weapon of an unfeeling mirth.

For there is often a contrast between the ardent humanity of Marryat's principles and the cruelty (occasionally the 'caddishness' even) of his humour. This is not to impute insincerity to his professions of a benevolent faith. He was an impulsive and generous friend, whether to cause or to individual ; nor did he ever shirk the possible evil consequences to himself of theories espoused or victims championed. But he had a love of horse-play, characteristic alike of the service in his time and of the great writers of the eighteenth century from whom he held direct inspirational descent. This liking for boisterous gaiety led him occasionally to involve his heroes in jokes of very questionable taste. Perhaps the most flagrant of these is the incident in *Mr. Midshipman Easy* when Jack, disguised as the devil, interrupts the giving of Supreme Unction to a dying man. That the priests are represented as extorting money from the victim for the selfish purposes of Holy Church may have salved the author's conscience, but does not disguise the fact that Jack is considered by his creator to be a very prankish, witty fellow.¹

¹ Marryat never outgrew this tendency to ugly humour. As late in his life as 1845 he wrote to a woman friend : ' Lady M[organ] going to be married ! I did not think

A certain hardness in self-interest Marryat can be forgiven. His naval record was so fearless and so fine that he might well have counted on more ample recognition than he received. After the Burmese War, during which for some while and with admitted distinction he had been in charge of naval operations in support of Sir Archibald Campbell's troops, he had the chagrin of seeing others promoted over his head. The temporary rank he had both long and arduously borne was, for a whole year, unconfirmed. His service sympathised.¹ Such influence as he possessed was used to put his case before the Admiralty. Here is transcribed the statement of his services drawn up by himself and forwarded with all the documents con-

she was such an Irish Jackass. I'd as soon go to church with a paintpot ! Mercy on us ! I have no doubt but that her ladyship has since the proposal a thousand times compared herself to Ninon de L'Enclos and she has painted her ceiling in clouds *d'azure*.'

¹ 'On the demise of Commodore Grant, July [*sic, cf.* Marryat's own statement] 25, 1824, the senior officer of the station promoted Captain Marryat to the command of the Tees (26) : but contrary to the custom during time of war, this appointment to a death vacancy was not confirmed by the Admiralty before July 25, 1825, upon what grounds we are unable to state ; yet we may be permitted to express our surprise at the circumstance, after the unqualified acknowledgment made by the Lords Commissioners of Captain Marryat's distinguished services.'—*Marshall's Naval Biography*, v. 269.

cerning the Bassein expedition to those in whose hands lay naval patronage. The phraseology is taken verbatim from Marryat's actual MS. :

AS MIDSHIPMAN.

1. I was mentioned by Lord Cochrane in his dispatches when a youngster for gallantry and good conduct.

2. Certificate from Lord James Townshend of having led the way in a hurricane which dismasted the Frigate.

3. Certificate of conduct in taking on the second explosive vessel at Basque roads.

4. Certificates of saving and attempting to save the lives of seven men at different times, by leaping after them at sea.

5. Served the Walcheren Expedition and sent home with the fever.

6. I have been considerably more than 100 times personally engaged with the enemy, and I have been twice wounded.

7. During the time I held the command at the opening of the Burmah war, I was 14 times thanked by the Governor in Council, and mentioned in public dispatches. I was then made into a death vacancy dated May, 1824—but was not confirmed to it, my commission bearing date July, 1825—by which 26 officers were put over my head.

If it can be proved that in any one instance, an officer who had done his duty in time of war, was not confirmed to a death vacancy occurring during the war, I waive my claim but otherwise I consider I was hardly treated.

But he had enemies in high places (made doubtless by his outspoken views on naval administration) and all that the eloquence of his achievement could produce was a C.B., and the appointment to the *Ariadne*.

These favours came too late to be relished. Already he was turning author in disgust. *The Naval Officer* appeared in 1829; in 1830 he resigned his ship and came on shore to make a name and a career.

But for all his angry consciousness of unjust neglect, he did not keep his tent. Straight from an arduous life at sea he plunged into four years of fashionable extravagance. We may regret that more details of this time of prodigality are not on record. They should explain much that occurs in his 'land' novels, particularly in *Japhet in Search of a Father*. Before leaving the service he had had his London life, based probably on his mother's handsome and hospitable home at Wimbledon, but involving at any rate one house of his own in town. He owned the lease of No. 5 Cleveland Row, and in 1827 let the house to Theodore Hook, from whom, it seems, he actually got his rent. But the first years of civilian buckishness were on quite a new scale of splendour and prominence. He became equerry to royalty; he gambled Sussex House in Hammersmith against a thousand-acre farm in Norfolk; he drank and

rioted the seasons through. The money flowed like the champagne, till both began to flag. Marryat but worked the harder at his writing and played the harder in his leisure hours. It suits our imagined picture of the man, this strenuous life of literature and elegance. He was a great worker and loved to live. The *Metropolitan Magazine*, which started publication in 1831, gave him scope for characteristic writing and paid him well.¹ *The King's Own*, pub-

¹ The history of the early years of the *Metropolitan Magazine* is briefly as follows : It was founded by Cochrane, a publisher, and Marryat had a large share alike in ownership and control. Campbell, the poet, whose name had a fatal fascination for founders of periodicals, was paid £300 a year as first editor ; but his indolent incompetence was too much for Marryat's quick temper and energetic mind, and by the autumn of 1832 the pair had quarrelled and Marryat became his own editor. In the meantime Cochrane had gone bankrupt, sold his share in the magazine to Valpy, another publisher, who resold it to Marryat. With Campbell retired and the entire paper his own property, the owner-editor-chief-contributor arranged for Saunders and Otley to publish the *Metropolitan* on commission, getting in return the contracts he desired for the book-issues of his novels. As one of the extracts given below will prove, the interaction of the magazine and the editor's naval-contracts was at times intimate enough, the anticipated profits on the latter coming in useful to pay the certain deficit on the former.

When the breach came between Marryat and Saunders and Otley, the former sold the ownership of the paper

lished in 1830, had brought him reputation even among the coteries. At intervals of about two years came other novels. In 1833, he fought his fight for Parliament and lost. Thus the days passed in busy scribbling, divided only by the glittering nights of wine and crowded rooms.

It was also in 1833 that he made a characteristically pungent attempt to get Horace Smith¹ to join him in the editorship of the *Metropolitan Magazine*. The incident is unrecorded, and in view of the personalities involved of considerable interest. The letter of invitation is as typical of Marryat as any that have survived, with its mock-violent flippancy and the hard practical sense beneath the nonchalance :

GARRICK CLUB,
April 6, 1833.

‘I leave town to-morrow for Norfolk, and wish to give you the benefit of my cogitations over the last three or four days. My thoughts have been as follows :

- (1) That being editor of a magazine is very hard work and rather harder than I like.

to his ex-publishers, in whose hands it ran on for a while, languished and died.

¹ One of the authors of *Rejected Addresses*, and by this time a very popular writer of historical romances of the Walter Scott school. Personally Horace Smith was one of the best-loved literary men of his time.

- (2) That I wish I had some help.
- (3) That I wish Mr. Horace Smith would join me.
- (4) That if he did the magazine and I would both be the better for it.

Having thus candidly expounded the nature of my thoughts I have only to state in what way I wish your assistance. The magazine in my hands, with my labour and my arrangement, is certainly at a profit, although in the hands of a bookseller it would be at a loss. My ideas are that you will be at no expense or risque, as should the magazine go down and prove a loss I stand it, but you must risque your labour with me and take your chance. I wish you would join me as co-editor of the magazine. This will be light work for both and can be done as well at Brighton as in London. In return I will of course not ask you to purchase any shares, but I will make over to you one third of the magazine as yours—that is the profits. Of course the cost of the magazine up to the present rests upon my own shoulders.

If all debts are paid and cut, I should say that the magazine now pays about £50 or £60 per month ; that it would pay better if you joined I do not doubt. Your writings, your name and your influence would assist it. If not “ there is no snakes in Virginia.”

On politics I believe we think much alike. I am a liberal and reformer, but not a radical. If there are any points on which we split, we must have our shares of our opinions, *i.e.* two thirds for me and one third for you in any direction.’

Presumably, had Horace Smith accepted, the magazine would have flourished more than in fact it did. But in such a case there would never have come into being the sub-editorship of the Hon. Edward Howard, to which (as will be seen in a minute) posterity owes much further Marryat correspondence of a brisk and amusing kind.

Suddenly in 1834 the novelist moved to Brighton. More precipitately still in 1835 to Brussels. There, while the crisis passed, he edited his paper by letter, and sent with each instalment of his serials eager, petulant letters to his by-now-assistant Edward Howard, railing at Howard himself, at publishers and public; joking his friend about his smart clothes and his love affairs; now boastful, now diffident; a strange engaging blend of reckless boy and scheming, tireless man.

A few extracts from Marryat's correspondence (with one exception hitherto unprinted) will illustrate his mood at this time. The first five are letters to Howard:

‘I like your letter amazingly—the pride that apes humility in it is to me delightful. I am very fond of touching people up in the *raw*. Now listen to me—You say you chuckled over your own performance. I don't doubt it. Do you recollect observing that the Don always declares his worst things the very best he ever wrote in his life—the

beam in another's eye, etc. The fact is that this does happen, but how is to me very strange. I can imagine a person being diffident about his own performance and doubting that which is *good* ; but I cannot conceive how it is that people imagine their worst things to be their best unless it is from the same principle that the most ill-favoured children find most favour in a mother's eyes. If so, those who fall into the error must have more of their *mother* in them than usual. I have often doubted my own performances. I recollect I doubted the opening of *The King's Own* as very overcharged and extravagant, but I never was content with any thing but the public were also.

‘ And now as to your writing—you say what is *wit* ? That has often been asked and very unsatisfactorily answered. I cannot exactly say what it is, but this I know forms its greatest qualification, *that there is no apparent effort, no straining at a good thing.* It must be so artificially natural, as to deceive by its artifice. One line must appear to be the parent of the other and even the words must flow like running water. I agree with you wit is not proved by the hoarse laugh but by the smile constantly playing on the lips without ever distorting the features by excess of merriment. It is the gentle titillation of the senses not the tickling of humour which creates excess. Your error is *straining to be very witty.* However you improve fast and some day or another (about 90 or 95) you will write passably well and be worth 2 *gns. a sheet.* I know you will d—n me in your heart for my overbearing but I don't mind that. People have a right to scream under punishment.’ (Probably 1834-5.)

I N T R O D U C T I O N

‘ I hope your waistcoat is a fine one as I know you like fine feathers. It was I who recommended White, who wished to send you something, to send you a waistcoat, as it will last longer than Bologna sausages or Ardennes hams. The first lady who asks me what to send you, I shall recommend to despatch a *PAIR OF BREECHES*.’

(July 11, 1835.)

‘ I enclose you a letter from S. and O. which I consider as excessively impertinent—at the same time there is *much in it*.¹ In the first place, it would appear that the printers have been asking for money—and that in all probability S. and O. have stated in reply *no effects*. In the next place, Mess. S. and O., if they are ready to purchase a book, must have plenty of money. Now I shall write to them very laconically, telling them that if the accounts are not settled before I leave town, I shall accept Valpy’s offers, and they will not only lose the *Metropolitan* but everything else. And the printers will of course lose the printing. I am resolved now to make them come to a settlement—and it must be *done* and by *you*. Ask for the accounts of 1833 under the following heads (although bye the bye you have them all in the book if you extract

¹ The letter in question is mild in tone, and suggests that the printers of the magazine should be paid for work already done. Unwisely, however, it goes on to suggest a contract for the book-rights of *Jacob Faithful*; and Marryat is at once awake to the chance of making the publishers pay *his* printer’s bill (it was no concern of theirs whatsoever) as a preliminary to securing the novel they were so anxious to bring out.

them)—Advertisement account unpaid—Accounts from Scotland, Ireland and Liverpool which closed at the end of the year—and general account unpaid. If you don't get it all for me, I'll stop your pay—by Heavens, for we must all go together !'

(May 26, 1834.)

'As for what Saunders & Otley say of *Japhet*, their praise is of as little value as their blame. They are *BOOKSELLERS*, and it is not necessary to be able to read or understand what they sell.'

(July 23, 1835.)

'I tell you very candidly that your advice is the very last I should take in an affair of this nature ; but instead of advice it was your duty to put me in possession of the real facts instead of concealing them as you have done . . . As for Otley's word and honour I value it as much as Mr. W——'s. However, as this is an act of treachery on the part of a publisher quite unjustifiable, I shall if I come to England again, settle the account on my arrival.'

(February 5, 1836.)

Lower down in the same letter :

'I have introduced you fairly into the literary world and you are now independent of me. As long as you were not so, I submitted to what few would have done, but now the case is different. I tell you candidly that every time you have given way to your temper, you have alienated me more and more, and when I left England this last time, I resolved gradually to withdraw from an intimacy which would inevitably end in an open rupture.'

I N T R O D U C T I O N

Finally, though at a slight sacrifice of chronological accuracy, may be given an extract from Marryat's well-known letter written late in 1836 to W. J. Otley himself, which letter (not surprisingly) severed their connection :

‘ . . . Considering your age, you are a little volcano, and if the insurance were aware of your frequent visits to the Royal Exchange, they would demand double premium for the building. . . . Your remark as to the money I have received may sound very well, mentioned as an isolated fact ; but how does it sound when it is put into juxtaposition with the sums you have received ? I, who have found everything, receiving a pittance while you, who have found nothing but the shop to sell in, receiving such a lion's share. It is slavery. I am Sinbad the Sailor and you are the Old Man of the Mountain (*sic*) clinging on my back, and you must not be surprised at my wishing to throw you off the first convenient opportunity. . . . We all have our own ideas of Paradise, and, if other authors think like me, the more pleasurable portion of anticipated bliss is that there will be no publishers there.’

The merits or demerits of Marryat's dispute with the firm which published most of his best books are of little importance nowadays beside the sad fact that it put an untimely end to the projected series of illustrated editions of his works, upon the first of which the present two-volume *Peter Simple* is based. Professor

George Saintsbury in his Introduction to the reissue of *Jacob Faithful* (the second of that projected series) published last year, summarised briefly the history of these illustrated Marryats : but the facts may perhaps here be somewhat expanded.

In the autumn of 1836 (before Marryat wrote the letter quoted above) Saunders and Otley issued a leaflet announcing ‘ a new and illustrated edition of the Novels of Captain Marryat, the Smollett of the Nineteenth Century.’ ‘ Characteristic Engravings of the Highest Talent and Originality ’ would ‘ add to the Universally Acknowledged Attractions of these Graphic Productions,’ and the series would include the following novels : *Peter Simple* ; *Jacob Faithful* ; *Japhet in Search of a Father* ; *Mr. Midshipman Easy* ; *Newton Foster* (*sic*) ; *The Pacha of Many Tales* ; and *The King’s Own*. Melancholy thought that of these seven titles only two were ever published !

The first item in the series—*Peter Simple*—duly appeared. The illustrations, twelve in number, were issued uncoloured, and it will be obvious to anyone who examines them carefully that Buss designed and etched them definitely for uncoloured publication. But just before the last volume of *Peter Simple* was ready, the publishers determined to improve their venture by embellishing the next title in the

series with plates in colour. They instructed Buss therefore to design the illustrations of *Jacob Faithful* in the open style suitable for hand-colouring, and announced their intention, by inserting in the final volume of *Peter Simple* a slip promising ‘a Striking Improvement in the succeeding portion of the illustrated edition.’

They did one further thing. They invited owners of uncoloured, *i.e.* original, copies of *Peter Simple* to send them in for colouring if desired. There are therefore in existence a few—a very few—sets of *Peter Simple* with the Buss plates coloured by hand ; but the effect is not really satisfactory, because it was an afterthought.

Then the quarrel came : and that it came very suddenly is suggested by a curious freak in Marryat bibliography. There have survived a few copies of *Japhet in Search of a Father* (presumably the next title due for illustrated publication) consisting of the ordinary sheets of the novel but bound in the style of the illustrated edition with ship-blocking, spine decoration and all. Evidently the cases—or some of them—had been prepared, and the publishers were unwilling to lose both their popular novelist and their binding costs.

As for Marryat himself, the collapse of his illustrated edition worried him, one fears, little

enough. He made an excellent new contract with Longmans, who duly published *Snarley-yow* and got a first-rate property.

In 1836 Marryat had come to London, sold the *Metropolitan* to his at-that-time-publishers, and with his thousand pounds retired to Belgium once again. We have brief pleasant glimpses of him with his children, about whom and about garden flowers that he has seen he writes to his mother who lives on at Wimbledon. The next move is to Switzerland. In Lausanne there is characteristic folly in Marryat's purchase of a whole shop of decorative fancies for a fête. He liked to see himself in a fine attitude ; it gratified at once his longing to see others happy and his vanity.

For all this while he grew in self-conceit—not naggingly or to the denigration of his rivals, but with a full-blooded pleasure in his own success and with a relish for his own grievances which can be shared in reading of them. He had been taken up by Lady Blessington and D'Orsay before the flight from London, and, if he blinked a little in the bright light of that intriguing constellation, he was in good company. In June, 1836, he writes to Lady Blessington :

‘I believe you sometimes look at the *Metropolitan* ; if so you will observe that I have commenced my *Diary of a Blasé* in the last month ; they say at home that it is very good magazine stuff, and is liked. I hope *The Book of Beauty* goes on well. I know that you and Mrs. Norton and I are the three looked up to, to provide for the public taste.’

This from the man who said that *The Naval Officer* could, if re-written, stand with *Pride and Prejudice* is not all dazzlement. . . .

At this point, as easily as at another, may be said the few words that must be said of Marryat’s domestic fortunes. He had married in 1819, but there is no reason to suspect any unhappiness between him and his wife until 1836 or thereabouts. Then, indeed, conjecture is inevitable. Florence Marryat’s book is far too reticent to leave suspicion unprovoked. Its very silence suggests that after his departure for America in 1837 he did not see, or at any rate live in common with his wife again. We only know that she survived him, and was still alive when Florence Marryat’s book appeared in 1872.

The problem is of importance for the light that its solution would throw on Marryat’s character. Here are a few sentences from a long letter written to her, probably in 1835.

Mrs. Marryat was in Belgium ; her husband in Brighton and in London :

‘ Dearest Kate,

.....

Thursday : I went on to Lady Blessington’s to call upon her. I met D’Orsay coming out and found her ladyship at home. We conversed for an hour and then I went away, having engaged myself to meet some celebrities at dinner to-morrow at eight o’clock.

Friday : I dined at Lady Blessington’s and met Count D’Orsay, the Russian Ambassador at Naples, Sir Robert Wilson and Lord Allen. It was a very pleasant party. It rained during the evening and D’Orsay drove me to St. James’s Street where he got out and then lent me his cab and horse to drive home.

Sunday : I came down to Wimbledon and found there the Bishop of Rochester and his wife Lady Sarah Murray. At dinner we had the Engelmanns and Sir Charles Pepys, the Master of the Rolls. A quiet party. The Bishop read prayers and we went to bed. To-day he read prayers again and preached the charity sermon. In the afternoon Mr. Engelmann preached. In the evening the Bishop read a sermon and then we all went to bed again. My dearest Kate I *like* going to church, and like going twice a day, as I hope that with God’s assistance I may become a better man. Do not think that because I visit Lady Blessington and others that I prefer their company. I do not, but I must mix in the world as it is, employed as I am.’

Surely these pathetic, naïve phrases have implications which bear out what has been written above of Marryat's nature and of his early riotous years on shore? He has been carried off his feet by all the tinsel and the flattery of fashionable London. His wife—shocked and, it may be, neglected—has charged him with godlessness or worse. Continually, from her severe retreat in Belgium, she frigidly complains and cautions him against the worldly and their snares. Like a schoolboy tactlessly reproached, longing for approbation but resentful of control, he makes his awkward lovable defence. He cannot conceal that he has sought indulgence just where it is forbidden; vanity must have its due. But here the boy gives way before the man and he excuses himself on grounds of 'business'? He is a clumsy sinner, Marryat the boy; and Marryat the man, a very ordinary one.

Unhappiness in marriage would explain his restlessness during the next few years. Financially embarrassed he may well have been, but there was spiritual as well as economic stress in his alternate fits of feverish extravagance and obstinate seclusion. When finally, in the teeth of every friendly exhortation, he withdrew to Langham and was no more seen, the student feels a need for proper motive that neither money trouble nor bad health can supply.

From Switzerland, as has been said, he sailed in 1837 for America. Of his troubles there ; of the toasting in Toronto of the ‘ crew that cut out the Caroline ’ and the bitter offence this gave to the Americans ; of the letters of abuse that in consequence followed him from place to place ; of the public dinners that endeavoured to belie them ; of his journey to Canada in the hope of war service against the rebels—there is no need of detailed telling.

A single incident merits mention here. Marryat was so plagued by anonymous and insulting correspondence that in 1838 he addressed an open reply to his persecutors which was published in the *Louisville Journal* and shows the writer at his wittiest and most cutting.¹ His candour and pugnacity provoked an angry answer, which would have been angrier and more pointed, could the writer have known that the ‘ Wizard of the Sea ’ was to publish six volumes of his American diary on his return to England and actually posted from New York in 1839 a plan of Navy Island for the information of the Admiralty ! But then Marryat had a talent for sarcasm, and allowed nothing to override his sense of an officer’s duty to his service.

¹ It is printed in full in Florence Marryat’s book.

In 1841 he was in London once again. The years of life remaining to him were to pass very differently from their predecessors. They began with a brief spell of social jollity, during which he entertained lavishly and became intimate with Dickens, Forster, Ainsworth, Clarkson Stanfield and Maclise. A touch of the old well-meant but somewhat ill-judged and thriftless generosity is evident in his action on leaving his house in Duke Street, St. James's. Not wanting the trouble of a furniture removal, he directed his entire house-full to be delivered at the tiny dwelling of a poor artist in the suburbs, who had six small rooms and could not coax the splendid furniture even across his narrow threshold.

In 1843 Marryat withdrew finally from London to Langham in Norfolk, and devoted his time to unprofitable and ardent farming. He refused obstinately to leave his retirement, though continual invitations reached him to this or that festivity of his old friends. He rode over his land on a pony, walked the countryside, taught his children and romped with them. His daughter, in her memoir, gives a very charming picture of these quiet years, describing Marryat in the capacity of parent ; showing him at work on his *Stories for Young People* ; engaging a governess and softening her wrath against wrong-doers ; sending long playful

letters to his many child friends ; entertaining farm labourers ; urging now Stanfield, now Maclise, now Forster to come and visit him.

Perhaps this determined peace showed Marryat conscious that the end was not far off. His health was bad ; his eyesight failing ; the rupture of blood-vessels became more frequent. As fortune seemed slowly to withdraw her smiling face, the man whom she once had favoured dropped his swagger and impulsiveness, growing serene and admirable. The veils of selfishness and ambition that had at times obscured his real nobility of character fell away. The Marryat of those closing country years is at once a moving and a lovely figure. He bears his ill-health patiently and sweetly ; he works devotedly at little tales designed to teach courage, resource and charity. There is no hint of maudlin reformation in his change of life—rather does he stand out, calm and strong, like some fine rock against which waves have dashed and great gales torn for long enough, but which now, in the serenity of a sunny sea, towers proudly and at peace.

Not even further money loss nor that more bitter grief that came with the drowning of his eldest son from the *Avenger* in December, 1847, could force him to do more than bow his head in dignified despair. Through the slow sum-

mer days of 1848 he faded quietly from the life that he was now content to leave. Early one August morning he was dead.

II

Marryat's works are so utterly the man himself, that the foregoing has other purpose beside that of mere human portraiture. Indeed, such picture as has been evolved of his character depends no less on the evidence implicit in his stories than on that recorded by his friends.

Although at times Marryat made deliberate attempts to assume a literary as opposed to a natural personality, he never succeeded. Actuality and the rough and tumble of daily happening soon shook him from the equipoise of authorship into the fighting attitude of one determined to face life and master it.

This careless gallantry, with its neglect of fashionable sensibility and impatient pursuit of kaleidoscopic incident, drew upon Marryat the reproof of critics of the day, who looked in vain for those qualities which in their modish view made literature, but could not blink the eagerness with which the public read his books.

Contemporary criticism, and that passed on Marryat during the decade following his death, found fault with him for coarseness and for a dubious morality. But the fashionable writers

of that period were not referring to the strain in him that may to-day offend our sense of decent breeding. Their censure was for profanity and sailors' oaths ; for Mildmay's intrigues with Eugenia and Carlotta ; for scenes of horrid realism (as, for example, that of the amazing death of Jacob Faithful's corpulent mamma or the unpleasant eating of Ben's mother in *Poor Jack*) ; for, it is sad to think, the bastard of Jack Easy's wet nurse, a classic nowadays for its very insignificance.¹

At every period of modern literature, the coteries have fancies to which poor authors, begging favour, must conform. In Marryat's day the shibboleths were refinement, poetic feeling, and characters of Ton. Of respect for rank (witness the Privilege element in this very *Peter Simple*) he had enough and to spare ; but a mere background of aristocracy could not compensate for a foreground of clowning, hardship and gross language, so that his works were condemned for vulgar and material, were shrugged aside as beneath the notice of his cultured age. There were, of course, perceptive men, writers themselves, who held to

¹ 'Good heavens ! Dr. Middleton. What can you mean by bringing this person here ?' exclaimed Mrs. Easy. 'Not a married woman and she had a child !' 'If you please, ma'am,' interrupted the young woman dropping a curtsy, 'it was a very little one.'

Marryat and revered him. Macaulay, Sydney Smith, Lockhart, even Carlyle went to him for companionship or consolation and were not ashamed to say so. 'My beloved *Jacob Faithful*,' says Thackeray in *The Roundabout Papers*; while Henry Kingsley makes admiring mention in *Ravenshoe* of *The King's Own* and of *Mr. Midshipman Easy*. But the professional appraisers thought otherwise and did not scruple to express themselves. When, in the twilight of his Norfolk days, he turned to brief, improving stories for the young, the critics saw their chance and took it cleverly. This low class writer, for all their careful indifference to his work, had a large public. The fact was troublesome, but undeniable.¹ At last a reason could be given. He was partly a maker of adventure stories; wholly a children's writer; and not a novelist at all. He was a minor Cooper; a tolerable successor to the Barbaulds and the Opies. Not *Masterman Ready* only, nor the *Children of the New Forest*, nor *The Little Savage*, but all his books were books for boys and girls.

This ingenious method at once of explaining and of shelving Marryat were skilfully ex-

¹ Amusing evidence of his world-wide popularity is provided by the anecdote, that during the serialisation of *Japhet*, an American vessel passing an English one in mid-Atlantic signalled to know if *Japhet* had found his father yet.

ploited. The sixties and seventies saw re-issues of his works 'arranged for reading by young people'—in other words most destructively revised. The fine, elastic English of a most English author¹ was sliced and cut to save the critics' face and soothe parental prejudice. Marryat went nurserywards in knickerbockers, but with him went some part of English literature.

The tragedy of this unscrupulous conspiracy is that it triumphed. Marryat has remained a 'juvenile' and is now losing his hold even on boys and girls. Perhaps the opportunity of bringing him once more into the parlour may be seized. The nursery casts him out because he knew not aeroplanes nor wireless; the library and the boudoir will do well to take him in, because he studied men and tramped life's highways and sailed her seas in wind and sunshine, because he knew how to fill his pages with fresh air and how to colour them with health and make them musical with words.

¹The 'Englishry' of Marryat is one of his noblest aspects. Professor Saintsbury, writing of *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, says: '... I can imagine no book more likely to eradicate from the rising generation and replace with healthier growth, certain weeds which flourish at the present. A more *English* book, as far as it goes, I do not know, and the rest of such Englishness as God gave us ... will, *experto crede*, find no difficulty in keeping company with it.' (*A Scrap Book*, 1922.)

For it is as a stylist that Marryat first claims the notice of the modern reader. His easy, rakish mastery of words, which swings his narrative along with something of the graceful swagger that must have distinguished his beloved frigates, carries the mind right back to Fielding and to Smollett, for between their day and the eighteen thirties was little enough of word economy or of the writing that sought point and humour and let elegance go hang.

Here are opening paragraphs from *Mr. Midshipman Easy*, one of the very rare occasions in literature upon which a sentence reads the better for the puns that it contains :

‘ Mr. Nicodemus Easy was a gentleman who lived down in Hampshire ; he was a married man, and in very easy circumstances. Most couples find it very easy to have a family, but not always quite so easy to maintain them. Mr. Easy was not at all uneasy on the latter score, as he had no children ; but he was anxious to have them, as most people covet what they cannot obtain. After ten years Mr. Easy gave it up as a bad job. Philosophy is said to console a man under disappointment, although Shakespeare asserts that it is no remedy for toothache ; so Mr. Easy turned philosopher, the very best profession a man can take up when he is fit for nothing else ; he must be a very incapable person indeed who cannot talk nonsense.

‘While Mr. Easy talked philosophy Mrs. Easy played patience, and they were a very happy couple riding side by side on their hobbies, and never interfering with each other. Upon any disputed question Mr. Easy invariably gave it up to Mrs. Easy, telling her that she should have her own way—and this pleased his wife ; but as Mr. Easy always took care when it came to the point, to have his way, he was pleased as well. It is true that Mrs. Easy had long found out that she did not have her own way long ; but she was of an easy disposition, and as, in nine cases out of ten it was of very little consequence how things were done, she was quite satisfied with his submission during the heat of the argument. Mr. Easy had admitted that she was right, and if like all men he would do wrong, why, what could a poor woman do ? ’

In several novels (and particularly in *Snarleyvow*) are examples of Marryat’s engaging tendency to break off, to wink at the reader in a sort of breathless undertone, to confess the troubles or the shifts of authorship, gaily to boast, pertly to moralise, and then without change of countenance to take up his story once again and rollick gaily on.

Sometimes his love of mischievous inconsequence leads him to interpose several pages of saucy irrelevance. The reflections on the incompatibility of fat and of ambition ; the warnings to ardent readers that he himself is

corpulent and dull and not at all a dashing spark like Bulwer Lytton ; that he is bored with authorship and bites his pens and stimulates his genius with brandy—are slapstick comedy of first-rate quality and are among the brightest passages in *Newton Forster*.

. Even at moments of grandiose description Marryat's pace and litheness do not desert him. At the beginning of the second volume of *The Naval Officer*, is a picture of Tristan d'Acunha, at once vivid and impressive but never outside the framework of the narrative. Chapter XV. of *Joseph Rushbrook or the Poacher* (the novel which during serialisation he would refer to as 'the hebdomadal little Joey') contains a description of a sleigh pursued by wolves. The incident is both thrilling and sombre, but handled so deftly that something of the speed of the flying sleigh infects the writing and enlivens it.

Many further extracts could, if space allowed, be given, and that without repetition of passages too generally familiar. David Hannay in his little book on Marryat¹ quotes one from *Peter Simple*, which, he rightly says, 'might have come straight from another Dampier.'

Of comic or pathetic portraiture, examples could be multiplied. Any one of the half-dozen principal stories contains passage after

¹ *Life of Captain Marryat*, 1889.

passage of swift humour. Some curious character is introduced ; his clothes and features flashed upon the reader's consciousness ; some trick of speech or quaintness or deformity insisted on ; and when the odd figure has been whisked away, the mind retains the facts of his absurdity or of his pathos, nor easily forgets them. The Dominic and old Beazley in *Jacob Faithful* ; Corporal Van Spitter in *Snarleyyow* ; Cophagus, the chemist in *Japhet* ; the sailor Huckaback in *The Pacha of Many Tales*, and half a hundred more, live in their twenty lines of Marryat more unmistakably than many characters on whom are lavished ten thousand words by authors more pretentious but less true in judgment.

With his sinister characters Marryat has been known to fumble. Vanslyperken is good ; but in *The Phantom Ship* Schriften has a very tedious and persistent villainy, that cannot be forgiven even to a being partly super-natural. Perhaps this failure and that success have a significance beyond their individual application. *The Phantom Ship* is a serious attempt at a romance of terror ; *Snarleyyow* is rather a parody of the same genre. Marryat, who went through life sneering at beliefs he was ashamed to share but cared not to deny, could ridicule his superstitions but could not ennoble them. It is characteristic of the man, and part of his appeal to

this self-conscious age of ours, that he most felt what he most seemed to mock.

A sense of the ridiculous being so large an element in Marryat's power of observation, it is not surprising that, like Dickens, he is no novelist of heroines. Drunken old women or wantons he can draw with fun and kindness—almost with affection. But before young girls of gentle breeding he stands fatuously conventional. His sentimentality that can detect the lovable behind the seemingly grotesque, can only smirk and moralise, confronted with the candour and serenity of girlhood. Amine in *The Phantom Ship*, Poor Jack's Bessy in her final chapters, and 'Aunt Milly' in *Percival Keene* are of all his heroines the three most real. But Bessy is a child of poverty; Amine a Dutch miser's daughter, and 'Aunt Milly' of an origin considerably below her station. They are not English virgins of the upper class, so that to them are permitted enterprise and strong emotion that would be thought unfeminine or worse in the sheltered damsels of the England Marryat knew.

From his amateurishness with maidenhood may be drawn permissibly an inference beyond the obvious. Was Marryat a caricaturist rather than a novelist of manners, and therefore helpless where foibles were not clearly marked, because without material for ridicule? Such

a conclusion would be unjust to him, for he can draw conventional young men, and kindly old people, and make them natural. Rather is it fairer to suggest that his experience of well-bred girls was very slight. His life was lived among men and among the lighter types of womanhood whom men, when they are pleasure-seeking with their friends, prefer. That his married life was unsuccessful has been hinted ; in such circumstances he might well take refuge where would be little likelihood of studying young persons of the kind that, for his public's sake, his heroes must be made to love.

But Marryat is quite novelist enough to bear responsibility for his faults. Some critics have excused his weaknesses as natural in a bluff naval chronicler. Such kindness is in fact cruelty, for the best books have deeper value either than the rough and ready stories of exciting incident that mid-Victorian prejudice considered them, or than the quaint records of a vanished period of life at sea, that some more recent commentators have thought fit to term them.

The blemishes, when all are told, are not so serious. His heroines are pretty dolls. This has been said and tentatively explained. His younger heroes have at times a precocity and an insensitive conceit that are an irritation. What has been said of Marryat's own youth

and character will prepare the reader for an undue emphasis on the achievements of adolescence. Jack Easy and Peter Simple possess, undoubtedly, characteristics that their creator thought, or wished to think, his own. That young Tom Beazley in *Jacob Faithful* and Timothy in *Japhet* should be so wise, so impudent, and so successful is probably good realism ; the vagrant life of those early days must have taught resource if it taught nothing else. In the same way the little girls in *Poor Jack*—one a milliner at fourteen, the other housewife at nine—likely have parallels to-day that live unchronicled.

More damaging to Marryat's reputation as a man of sense is his evident delight in those Admirable (but priggish) Crichtons who so frequently befriend, champion, and humbly admire the cheeky boys jaunting across the world in their unthinking teens. Mesty, the negro worshipper of young Jack Easy ; O'Brien in *Peter Simple* ; Anderson in *Poor Jack*—here indeed are a trio of tedious infallibles. Their creation, and the relish with which it is achieved, imply that Marryat, like many another jovial good liver, was at no time indisposed to preach morality and preach it with pomposity.

The tendency grew of course more obvious with age. The transition from apparent

hedonism to frank didacticism occurs about 1840. The concluding pages of *Joseph Rushbrook*, and several passages in *Poor Jack* show clearly the change of habit. One can only deplore a transformation that lost the world a genial rake and menaced it with yet another pietistic bore.

No further hostile criticism on Marryat's work suggests itself, unless one dwells (unreasonably) on his inclination to repeat scenes and happenings. That he is fond of punning and of knockabout will endear him to a public greater than that which is distraught by such innocuous amusements. The rest of Marryat is sheer delight.

One may go to him for cynical good sense ; for knowledge of the world ; for gaiety and laughter ; for swift, uproarious pantomime ; for plots that ripple easily to their end or swirl over rocks or slide dangerously between steep banks ; for vivid pictures of a vanished world ; for agile, simple English. He offers all of these and more. Even to sociologists and students of conditions in the past, he will supply those incidental data which the history books ignore. In several of the novels are actual figures of the international exchanges after the European wars. In *Joseph Rushbrook* we find paper roubles rejected by an angry Irishman as too particoloured and too dirty to be any-

thing but soup tickets. Elsewhere are descriptions of convincing and authentic pirates¹ of Vauxhall² and of fashionable life³; a picture of a Greenwich whitebait dinner⁴ (such an one as that for which Peacock wrote his Latin poem); and the portrait of an ambitious, ungenerous hostess of the twenties who, finding a *conversazione* cheaper than a rout, did just what Mrs. Proudie was to do in mid-Victorian Barchester, and chose the former.⁵

One further aspect of Marryat's genius may be mentioned, not only because it has direct relevance to the novel here reprinted, but also because it bears out what has been said of his perpetual zest for life, of his eager interest in all about him, and shows his skill in using things observed and persons encountered as material for new and creative work.

Over and above the personal experience, which is never wholly absent from the make-up of his novels, the adventures of other men—adventures of which he knew nothing save from the mouths or writings of those who had en-

¹ In *The Pirate and the Three Cutters*. The Pirates in *Percival Keene* are super-human.

² In *Joseph Rushbrook*.

³ In *Japhet in Search of a Father* and in *Valerie*.

⁴ In *Poor Jack*.

⁵ In *Newton Forster* and in *Barchester Towers*.

countered them—could so fire his imagination as to set it most characteristically aflame. How successfully he could transmute recorded narrative into what reads as genuine Marryat is the more easily appreciated, if the works thus extraneously inspired be read in relation to his original work, and then compared with any of the transcripts from life which appeared over the signature of Charles Reade. Whereas the latter have the careful enthusiasm (or alternatively the indignation) of actuality-writing by a special correspondent, the former move with all the swing and liveness of their fellows ; and the fact that they are borrowed narrative may interest (as must any contributory information relative to a piece of literature), but is not required as explanation or in extenuation of their qualities.

Peter Simple itself is of course the outstanding specimen of this group of Marryat's works. Many good judges rank it among the first three of all his novels, and one or two claim for it actual supremacy. Of these Sir Chartres Biron is one ('the best of all his books,' he says. 'As a picture of life on board ship it has a mellowness and finality which, except perhaps in *Midshipman Easy*, is never reached again'), and to this critic's essay on Marryat (already quoted) the curious are referred for valuable particulars of the work by Donald Henchy

O'Brien,¹ published many years before *Peter Simple*, and the quarry from which Marryat drew the greater part of his story's incident.

For the hero—for Peter Simple himself—tradition supplies an original unconnected with O'Brien's book. This was a young naval officer of the time, who later became Vice-Admiral George Vernon Jackson and died in 1876. A volume of Admiral Jackson's early reminiscences was published two years ago.²

In addition to *Peter Simple* the novelist's adaptations include *The Travels and Adventures of Monsieur Violet* and *The Privateersman*. The former, published in 1843, was avowedly a transcript of fact; but Florence Marryat's life of her father describes the visit of the original M. Violet to Langham, where he told his tale and, in the intervals, astounded the natives by what can only have been a premonition of the Rodeo—details withheld in Marryat's own preface to the published work. The history of *The Privateersman* is related in Mr. S. M. Ellis' *William Harrison Ainsworth and his Friends*³; and the fact that Ainsworth should have decided to send the rough unfinished manuscript of a dead officer in the merchant

¹ *My Adventures During the Late War: A Narrative of Shipwreck, Captivity, and Escapes from French Prisons and Sea Service in 1804-14.* (New edition, London, 1902.)

² Blackwood, 1927. ³ 2 vols. London, 1911.

service to Marryat for editing and rounding off, suggests that his quality as mouthpiece for other folks ideas was already at the time recognised and appreciated.

Marryat sleeps under a faded but conspicuous tomb upon the Norfolk coast. A heavy base supports a marble urn, from which, also in marble and pathetically, issues a dying flame. The low rococo house in which he lived has given place to one of brick—solid and sensible enough, but sadly ‘dunch’ after the Gothic prettiness that was and should be Langham.

The books remain. They are a monument which cannot fade, a dwelling-place for their creator’s spirit which cannot change. It is a melancholy pilgrimage to that remote spot in the north of Norfolk ; but those who would pay homage at Marryat’s more enduring shrine will have no melancholy, but the joy that comes with reading literature.

NOTE

This essay is copyright in the United States of America. For authority to reprint such portions of it as first appeared in “The London Mercury” the author is indebted to the courtesy of Mr. J. C. Squire. He desires also to express thanks to the executors of the late Horace Round and to Mr. T. Milligan Grundy for their permission to make use of certain autograph letters of Marryat in their possession.

A NOTE ON R. W. BUSS

(Communicated by one of his grandsons.)

ROBERT WILLIAM BUSS was born in the parish of St. Martin-le-Grand, London, in 1804. He was the eldest son of W. C. Buss, an engraver and enameller, to whom he, for a time, acted as an apprentice.

When he was about twenty he attended the studio of George Clint, A.R.A., who taught him portrait and subject painting. At the beginning of his career he was much engaged in theatrical portraiture, and was employed as the illustrator of Cumberland's *British Drama*.

He exhibited for the first time in 1826, and between 1826 and 1859 his pictures appeared frequently at the Academy, the British Institute, and Suffolk Street. At this early period he contributed illustrations to Knight's editions of *London*, *Chaucer*, *Shakespeare*, *Old England*, and *The Penny Magazine*.

In 1836 he was associated with the original edition of *Pickwick*, for which he executed two etchings, viz. 'The Cricket Match' and 'The Fat Boy Awake'; these being his first etchings on steel.

He rapidly perfected himself in the art of steel etching and produced a number of plates in illustration of works by Marryat, Ainsworth, Mrs. Trollope, and other authors of the day. He also designed 'The Spectre of Tappington,' which formed the frontispiece of the *Ingoldsby Legends*. The last novel which Buss illustrated was Ainsworth's *Court of King James II*.

His two largest pictures, painted for the Earl of Hardwick, were entitled respectively 'The Origin of Music' and 'The Triumph of Music.' For Mr. Haywood, M.P., he executed in 1840 a series of drawings illustrating 'College Life at the Universities'; while to the Westminster competition in 1844 he forwarded a cartoon of Prince Henry and

Judge Gascoigne, entitled 'The Power of the Law.' Between the years 1850-1852 he edited *The Fine Arts Journal*, published by George Rowney & Co.

In 1853 Buss prepared a series of four lectures on 'Satire, Art, and Caricature,' which he delivered with success in London, Manchester, Leeds, Sheffield, Plymouth, and various other literary institutions throughout the kingdom. These lectures subsequently appeared in book form under the title of *English Graphic Satire* (1874).

His last picture, entitled 'Dickens' Dream,' was left partially completed. It represents the novelist, seated in his library at Gadshill, dreaming of his novels; the walls being covered with all the notable Dickensian characters from 'Pickwick' to 'Edwin Drood.'

Buss died in London in 1875. A complete list of his pictures was published in *Notes and Queries* during the same year. Among his pictures the following have been engraved, viz. :

The Bitter Morning.
The Stingy Traveller.
The Wooden Walls of Old England.
Soliciting a Vote.
The Musical Bore.
The Frosty Reception.
Master's Out.
Time and Tide Wait for No Man.
The Old Commodore.
Watt's First Experiment with Steam.
The First of September.
The Introduction of Tobacco.
The Biter Bit.
The Romance.
Satisfaction !

Note.—In 1887, in the Victoria Edition of *Pickwick*, Messrs. Chapman & Hall reproduced not only these two plates but also two others, 'Mr. Pickwick at the Review' and 'The Influence of Salmon,' which had been prepared by Buss for the original edition, but not used.

PETER SIMPLE

PETER SIMPLE

CHAPTER I

The great advantage of being the fool of the family—
My destiny is decided, and I am consigned to a
stock-broker as part of his Majesty's sea stock—
Unfortunately for me Mr. Handycock is a *bear*, and
I get very little dinner.

IF I cannot narrate a life of adventurous and
daring exploits, fortunately I have no heavy
crimes to confess : and, if I do not rise in the
estimation of the reader for acts of gallantry
and devotion in my country's cause, at least I
may claim the merit of zealous and persevering
continuance in my vocation. We are all of us
variously gifted from Above, and he who is con-
tent to walk, instead of to run, on his allotted
path through life, although he may not so
rapidly attain his goal, has the advantage of
not being out of breath upon his arrival. Not
that I mean to infer that my life has not been
one of adventure. I only mean to say, that in
all which has occurred, I have been a passive,
rather than an active, personage ; and, if events
of interest are to be recorded, they certainly
have not been sought by me.

As well as I can recollect and analyze my
early propensities, I think that, had I been
permitted to select my own profession, I should

in all probability have bound myself apprentice to a tailor ; for I always envied the comfortable seat which they appeared to enjoy upon the shopboard, and their elevated position, which enabled them to look down upon the constant succession of the idle or the busy, who passed in review before them in the main street of the country town, near to which I passed the first fourteen years of my existence.

But my father, who was a clergyman of the Church of England, and the youngest brother of a noble family, had a lucrative living, and a 'soul above buttons,' if his son had not. It has been from time immemorial the heathenish custom to sacrifice the greatest fool of the family to the prosperity and naval superiority of the country, and, at the age of fourteen, I was selected as the victim. If the custom be judicious, I had no reason to complain. There was not one dissentient voice, when it was proposed before all the varieties of my aunts and cousins, invited to partake of our new-year's festival. I was selected by general acclamation. Flattered by such an unanimous acknowledgment of my qualification, and a stroke of my father's hand down my head which accompanied it, I felt as proud, and, alas ! as unconscious as the calf with gilded horns, who plays and mumbles with the flowers of the garland which designates his fate to every one but himself. I even felt, or thought I felt, a slight degree of military ardour, and a sort of vision of future grandeur passed before me, in the distant vista of which I perceived a coach with four horses and a service

of plate. It was, however, driven away before I could decipher it, by positive bodily pain, occasioned by my elder brother Tom, who, having been directed by my father to snuff the candles, took the opportunity of my abstraction to insert a piece of the still ignited cotton into my left ear. But as my story is not a very short one, I must not dwell too long on its commencement. I shall therefore inform the reader, that my father, who lived in the north of England, did not think it right to fit me out at the country town, near to which we resided ; but about a fortnight after the decision which I have referred to, he forwarded me to London on the outside of the coach, with my best suit of bottle-green and six shirts. To prevent mistakes, I was booked in the way-bill ‘to be delivered to Mr. Thomas Handycock, No. 14, Saint Clement’s-lane—carriage paid.’ My parting with the family was very affecting ; my mother cried bitterly, for, like all mothers, she liked the greatest fool which she had presented to my father, better than all the rest ; my sisters cried because my mother cried ; Tom roared for a short time more loudly than all the rest, having been chastised by my father for breaking his fourth window in that week ; during all which, my father walked up and down the room with impatience, because he was kept from his dinner, and, like all orthodox divines, he was tenacious of the only sensual enjoyment permitted to his cloth.

At last I tore myself away. I had blubbered till my eyes were so red and swollen, that the

pupils were scarcely to be distinguished, and tears and dirt had veined my cheeks like the marble of the chimney-piece. My handkerchief was soaked through with wiping my eyes and blowing my nose, before the scene was over. My brother Tom, with a kindness which did honour to his heart, exchanged his for mine, saying, with fraternal regard, 'Here, Peter, take mine, it's as dry as a bone.' But my father would not wait for a second handkerchief to perform its duty. He led me away through the hall, when, having shaken hands with all the men, and kissed all the maids, who stood in a row with their aprons to their eyes, I quitted my paternal roof.

The coachman accompanied me to the place from whence the stage was to start. Having seen me securely wedged between two fat old women, and having put my parcel inside, he took his leave, and in a few minutes I was on my road to London.

I was too much depressed to take notice of anything during my journey. When we arrived in London, they drove to the Blue Boar, (in a street, the name of which I have forgotten). I had never seen or heard of such an animal, and certainly it did appear very formidable ; its mouth was open and teeth very large. What surprised me still more was to observe that its teeth and hoofs were of pure gold. Who knows, thought I, that in some of the strange countries which I am doomed to visit, but that I may fall in with, and shoot one of these terrific monsters ? with what haste shall I select those

precious parts, and with what joy should I, on my return, pour them as an offering of filial affection into my mother's lap !—and then, as I thought of my mother, the tears again gushed into my eyes.

The coachman threw his whip to the ostler, and the reins upon the horses' backs : he then dismounted, and calling to me, ' Now, young gentleman, I'se a-waiting,' he put a ladder up for me to get down by ; then turning to a porter, he said to him, ' Bill, you must take this here young gem'man and that ere parcel to this here direction. Please to remember the coachman, Sir.' I replied that I certainly would, if he wished it, and walked off with the porter ; the coachman observing, as I went away, ' Well, he is a fool—that's sartain.' I arrived quite safe at St. Clement's-lane, when the porter received a shilling for his trouble from the maid who let me in, and I was shown up into a parlour, where I found myself in company with Mrs. Handycock.

Mrs. Handycock was a little meagre woman, who did not speak very good English, and who appeared to me to employ the major part of her time in bawling out from the top of the stairs to the servants below. I never saw her either read a book or occupy herself with needlework, during the whole time I was in the house. She had a large grey parrot, and I really cannot tell which screamed the worst of the two—but she was very civil and kind to me, and asked me ten times a-day when I had last heard of my grandfather, Lord Privilege. I observed

that she always did so if any company happened to call in during my stay at her house. Before I had been there ten minutes, she told me that she ‘hadored sailors—they were the defendiours and preserviours of their kings and countries,’ and that ‘Mr. Handycock would be home by four o’clock, and then we should go to dinner. Then she jumped off her chair to bawl to the cook from the head of the stairs—‘Jemima, Jemima !—ve’ll ha’e the viting biled instead of fried.’ ‘Can’t, marm,’ replied Jemima, ‘they be all hegged and crumbed, with their tails in their mouths.’ ‘Vell, then, never mind, Jemima,’ replied the lady. ‘Don’t put your finger into the parrot’s cage, my love—he’s apt to be cross with strangers. Mr. Handycock will be home at four o’clock, and then we shall have our dinner. Are you fond of viting?’

As I was very anxious to see Mr. Handycock, and very anxious to have my dinner, I was not sorry to hear the clock on the stairs strike four ; when Mrs. Handycock again jumped up, and put her head over the banisters, ‘Jemima, Jemima, it’s four o’clock !’ ‘I hear it, marm,’ replied the cook ; and she gave the frying-pan a twist, which made the hissing and the smell come flying up into the parlour, and made me more hungry than ever.

Rap, tap, tap ! ‘There’s your master, Jemima,’ screamed the lady. ‘I hear him, marm,’ replied the cook. ‘Run down, my dear, and let Mr. Handycock in,’ said his wife. ‘He’ll be so surprised at seeing you open the door.’

I ran down as Mrs. Handycock desired me, and opened the street-door. 'Who the devil are you?' in a gruff voice, cried Mr. Handycock; a man about six feet high, dressed in blue cotton-net pantaloons and Hessian boots, with a black coat and waistcoat. I was a little rebuffed, I must own, but I replied that I was Mr. Simple. 'And pray, Mr. Simple, what would your grandfather say if he saw you now? I have servants in plenty to open my door, and the parlour is the proper place for young gentlemen.'

'Law, Mr. Handycock,' said his wife, from the top of the stairs, 'how can you be so cross? I told him to open the door to surprise you.'

'And you have surprised me,' replied he, 'with your cursed folly.'

While Mr. Handycock was rubbing his boots on the mat, I went up stairs, rather mortified, I must own, as my father had told me that Mr. Handycock was his stock-broker, and would do all he could to make me comfortable; indeed, he had written to that effect in a letter, which my father showed to me before I left home. When I returned to the parlour, Mrs. Handycock whispered to me, 'Never mind, my dear, it's only because there's something wrong on 'Change. Mr. Handycock is a *bear* just now.' I thought so too, but I made no answer, for Mr. Handycock came up stairs, and walking with two strides from the door of the parlour to the fire-place, turned his back to it, and lifting up his coat-tails, began to whistle.

‘Are you ready for your dinner, my dear?’ said the lady, almost trembling.

‘If the dinner is ready for me. I believe we usually dine at four,’ answered her husband gruffly.

‘Jemima, Jemima, dish up! do you hear, Jemima?’ ‘Yes, marm,’ replied the cook, ‘directly I’ve thickened the butter’; and Mrs. Handycock resumed her seat, with, ‘Well, Mr. Simple, and how is your grandfather, Lord Privilege?’ ‘He is quite well, ma’am,’ answered I, for the fifteenth time at least. But dinner put an end to the silence which followed this remark. Mr. Handycock lowered his coat-tails and walked down stairs, leaving his wife and me to follow at our leisure.

‘Pray, ma’am,’ inquired I, as soon as he was out of hearing, ‘what is the matter with Mr. Handycock, that he is so cross to you?’

‘Vy, my dear, it is one of the misfortunes of matrimony, that ven the husband’s put out, the vife is sure to have her share of it. Mr. Handycock must have lost money on ’Change, and then he always comes home cross. Ven he vins, then he is as merry as a cricket.’

‘Are you people coming down to dinner?’ roared Mr. Handycock from below. ‘Yes, my dear,’ replied the lady, ‘I thought that you were washing your hands.’ We descended into the dining-room, where we found that Mr. Handycock had already devoured two of the whittings, leaving only one on the dish for his wife and me. ‘Would you like a little bit of viting, my dear?’ said the lady to me. ‘It’s

not worth halving,' observed the gentleman, in a surly tone, taking up the fish with his own knife and fork, and putting it on his plate.

'Well, I'm so glad you like them, my dear,' replied the lady meekly ; then turning to me, 'there's some nice roast *weal* coming, my dear.'

The veal made its appearance, and fortunately for us Mr. Handycrack could not devour it all. He took the lion's share, nevertheless, cutting off all the brown, and then shoving the dish over to his wife to help herself and me. I had not put two pieces in my mouth before Mr. Handycrack desired me to get up and hand him the porter-pot, which stood on the side-board. I thought that if it was not right for me to open a door, neither was it for me to wait at table—but I obeyed him without making a remark.

After dinner, Mr. Handycrack went down to the cellar for a bottle of wine. 'O deary me !' exclaimed his wife, 'he must have lost a mint of money—we had better go up stairs and leave him alone ; he'll be better after a bottle of port, perhaps.' I was very glad to go away, and being very tired, I went to bed without any tea, for Mrs. Handycrack dared not venture to make it before her husband came up stairs.

CHAPTER II

Fitting out on the shortest notice—Fortunately for me this day Mr. Handycrack *is* a bear, and I fare very well—I set off for Portsmouth—Behind the coach I meet a man before the mast—He is *disguised* with liquor, but is not the only disguise I fall in with in my journey.

THE next morning Mr. Handycrack appeared to be in somewhat better humour. One of the linen-draper who fitted out cadets, etc. ‘on the shortest notice,’ was sent for, and orders given for my equipment, which Mr. Handycrack insisted should be ready on the day afterwards, or the articles would be left on his hands; adding, that my place was already taken in the Portsmouth coach.

‘Really, sir,’ observed the man, ‘I’m afraid—on such very short notice——’

‘Your card says, “the shortest notice,”’ rejoined Mr. Handycrack, with the confidence and authority of a man who is enabled to correct another by his own assertions. ‘If you do not choose to undertake the work, another will.’

This silenced the man, who made his promise, took my measure, and departed; and soon afterwards Mr. Handycrack also quitted the house.

What with my grandfather and the parrot, and Mrs. Handycrack wondering how much money her husband had lost, running to the

head of the stairs and talking to the cook, the day passed away pretty well till four o'clock ; when, as before, Mrs. Handycock screamed, the cook screamed, the parrot screamed, and Mr. Handycock rapped at the door, and was let in—but not by me. He ascended the stairs with three bounds, and coming into the parlour, cried, ‘ Well, Nancy, my love, how are you ? ’ Then stooping over her, ‘ Give me a kiss, old girl. I’m as hungry as a hunter. Mr. Simple, how do you do ? I hope you have passed the morning agreeably. I must wash my hands and change my boots, my love ; I am not fit to sit down to table with you in this pickle. Well, Polly, how are you ? ’

‘ I’m glad you’re hungry, my dear, I’ve such a nice dinner for you,’ replied the wife, all smiles. ‘ Jemima, be quick and dish up—Mr. Handycock is so hungry.’

‘ Yes, marm,’ replied the cook ; and Mrs. Handycock followed her husband into his bedroom on the same floor, to assist him at his toilet.

‘ By Jove, Nancy, the *bulls* have been nicely taken in,’ said Mr. Handycock, as we sat down to dinner.

‘ O I am so glad ! ’ replied his wife, giggling ; and so I believe she was, but why I did not understand.

‘ Mr. Simple,’ said he, ‘ will you allow me to offer you a little fish.’

‘ If you do not want it all yourself, sir,’ replied I politely.

Mrs. Handycock frowned and shook her head

at me, while her husband helped me. ‘ My dove, a bit of fish ? ’

We both had our share to-day, and I never saw a man more polite than Mr. Handycock. He joked with his wife, asked me to drink wine with him two or three times, talked about my grandfather ; and, in short, we had a very pleasant evening.

The next morning all my clothes came home, but Mr. Handycock, who still continued in good humour, said that he would not allow me to travel by night, that I should sleep there and set off the next morning ; which I did at six o’clock, and before eight I had arrived at the Elephant and Castle, where we stopped for a quarter of an hour. I was looking at the painting representing this animal with a castle on its back : and assuming that of Alnwick, which I had seen, as a fair estimate of the size and weight of that which he carried, was attempting to enlarge my ideas so as to comprehend the stupendous bulk of the elephant, when I observed a crowd assembled at the corner ; and asking a gentleman who sat by me in a plaid cloak, whether there was not something very uncommon to attract so many people, he replied, ‘ Not very, for it is only a drunken sailor.’

I rose from my seat, which was on the hinder part of the coach, that I might see him, for it was a new sight to me, and excited my curiosity ; when to my astonishment he staggered from the crowd, and swore that he’d go to Portsmouth. He climbed up by the wheel of the coach and sat down by me. I believe that I stared at him

very much, for he said to me, ‘What are you gaping at, you young sculping? Do you want to catch flies? or did you never see a chap half seas over before?’

I replied, ‘that I had never been at sea in my life, but that I was going.’

‘Well, then, you’re like a young bear, all your sorrows to come—that’s all, my hearty,’ replied he. ‘When you get on board, you’ll find monkey’s allowance—more kicks than halfpence. I say, you pewter-carrier, bring us another pint of ale.’

The waiter of the inn, who was attending the coach, brought out the ale, half of which the sailor drank, and the other half threw into the waiter’s face, telling him ‘that was his allowance; and now,’ said he, ‘what’s to pay?’ The waiter, who looked very angry, but appeared too much afraid of the sailor to say any thing, answered fourpence; and the sailor pulled out a handful of bank-notes, mixed up with gold, silver, and coppers, and was picking out the money to pay for his beer, when the coachman, who was impatient, drove off.

‘There’s cut and run,’ cried the sailor, thrusting all the money into his breeches pocket. ‘That’s what you’ll learn to do, my joker, before you’ve been two cruizes to sea.’

In the meantime the gentleman in the plaid cloak, who was seated by me, smoked his cigar without saying a word. I commenced a conversation with him relative to my profession, and asked him whether it was not very difficult to learn. ‘Larn,’ cried the sailor, interrupting

us, 'no ; it may be difficult for such chaps as me before the mast to larn, but you, I presume, is a reefer, and they a'nt got much to larn, 'cause why, they pipeclays their weekly accounts, and walks up and down with their hands in their pockets. You must larn to chaw baccy, drink grog, and call the cat a beggar, and then you knows all a midshipman's expected to know now-a-days. Ar'n't I right, sir ?' said the sailor, appealing to the gentleman in a plaid cloak. 'I axes you, because I see you're a sailor by the cut of your jib. Beg pardon, sir,' continued he, touching his hat, 'hope no offence.'

'I am afraid that you have nearly hit the mark, my good fellow,' replied the gentleman.

The drunken fellow then entered into conversation with him, stating that he had been paid off from the Audacious at Portsmouth, and had come up to London to spend his money with his messmates ; but that yesterday he had discovered that a Jew at Portsmouth had sold him a seal as gold for fifteen shillings, which proved to be copper, and that he was going back to Portsmouth to give the Jew a couple of black eyes for his rascality, and that when he had done that, he was to return to his messmates, who had promised to drink success to the expedition at the Cock and Bottle, St. Martin's Lane, until he should return.

The gentleman in the plaid cloak commended him very much for his resolution : for he said, 'that although the journey to and from Portsmouth would cost twice the value of a gold seal,

yet, that in the end it might be worth a *Jew's eye*.' What he meant I did not comprehend.

Whenever the coach stopped, the sailor called for more ale, and always threw the remainder which he could not drink into the face of the man who brought it out for him, just as the coach was starting off, and then tossed the pewter pot on the ground for him to pick up. He became more tipsy every stage, and the last from Portsmouth, when he pulled out his money he could find no silver, so he handed down a note, and desired the waiter to change it. The waiter crumpled it up and put it into his pocket, and then returned the sailor the change for a one-pound note : but the gentleman in the plaid had observed that it was a five-pound note which the sailor had given, and insisted upon the waiter producing it, and giving the proper change. The sailor took his money, which the waiter handed to him, begging pardon for the mistake, although he coloured up very much at being detected. ' I really beg your pardon,' said he again, ' it was quite a mistake ' : whereupon the sailor threw the pewter pot at the waiter, saying, ' I really beg your pardon too,'—and with such force, that it flattened upon the man's head, who fell senseless on the road. The coachman drove off, and I never heard whether the man was killed or not.

After the coach had driven off, the sailor eyed the gentleman in the plaid cloak for a minute or two, and then said, ' When I first looked at you I took you for some officer in mufti ; but now that I see you look so sharp after the rhino, it's

my idea that you're some poor devil of a Scotchman, mayhap second mate of a marchant vessel—there's half-a-crown for your sarvices—I'd give you more, if I thought you would spend it.'

The gentleman laughed, and took the half-crown, which I afterwards observed that he gave to a grey-headed beggar at the bottom of Portsdown Hill. I inquired of him how soon we should be at Portsmouth ; he answered that we were passing the lines ; but I saw no lines, and I was ashamed to show my ignorance. He asked me what ship I was going to join. I could not recollect her name, but I told him it was painted on the outside of my chest, which was coming down by the waggon : all that I could recollect was that it was a French name.

'Have you no letter of introduction to the captain ?' said he.

'Yes, I have,' replied I ; and I pulled out my pocket-book in which the letter was. 'Captain Savage, H.M. ship Diomedé,' continued I, reading to him.

To my surprise he very coolly proceeded to open the letter, which, when I perceived what he was doing, occasioned me immediately to snatch the letter from him, stating my opinion at the same time that it was a breach of honour, and that in my opinion he was no gentleman.

'Just as you please, youngster,' replied he. 'Recollect, you have told me I am no gentleman.'

He wrapped his plaid around him, and said no more ; and I was not a little pleased at having silenced him by my resolute behaviour.

CHAPTER III

I am made to look very blue at the Blue Posts—Find wild spirits around, and, soon after, hot spirits within me, at length my spirits overcome me—Call to pay my respects to the Captain, and find that I had had the pleasure of meeting him before—No sooner out of one scrape than into another.

WHEN we stopped, I inquired of the coachman which was the best inn. He answered ‘that it was the Blue Postesses, where the midshipmen leave their chestesses, call for tea and toastesses, and sometimes forget to pay for their breakfastesses.’ He laughed when he said it, and I thought that he was joking with me ; but he pointed out two large blue posts at the door next the coach-office, and told me that all the midshipmen resorted to that hotel. He then asked me to remember the coachman, which, by this time, I had found out implied that I was not to forget to give him a shilling, which I did, and then went into the inn. The coffee-room was full of midshipmen, and, as I was anxious about my chest, I inquired of one of them if he knew when the waggon would come in.

‘Do you expect your mother by it?’ replied he.

‘O no ! but I expect my uniforms—I only wear these bottle-greens until they come.’

‘And pray what ship are you going to join?’

‘The Die-a-maid—Captain Thomas Kirk-wall Savage.’

‘The Diomedé—I say, Robinson, a’n’t that the frigate in which the midshipmen had four dozen a-piece for not having pipe-clayed their weekly accounts on the Saturday?’

‘To be sure it is,’ replied the other; ‘why, the captain gave a youngster five dozen the other day for wearing a scarlet watch-ribbon.’

‘He’s the greatest Tartar in the service,’ continued the other; ‘he flogged the whole starboard watch the last time that he was on a cruize, because the ship would only sail nine knots upon a bowline.’

‘O dear!’ said I, ‘then I’m very sorry that I am going to join him.’

‘’Pon my soul I pity you: you’ll be fagged to death; for there’s only three midshipmen in the ship now—all the rest ran away. Didn’t they, Robinson?’

‘There’s only two left now:—for poor Matthews died of fatigue. He was worked all day, and kept watch all night for six weeks, and one morning he was found dead upon his chest.’

‘God bless my soul!’ cried I, ‘and yet, on shore, they say he is such a kind man to his midshipmen.’

‘Yes,’ replied Robinson, ‘he spreads that report everywhere. Now, observe, when you first call upon him, and report your having come to join his ship, he’ll tell you that he is very happy to see you, and that he hopes your family are well—then he’ll recommend you to

go on board and learn your duty. After that, stand clear. Now, recollect what I have said, and see if it does not prove true. Come, sit down with us and take a glass of grog, it will keep your spirits up.'

These midshipmen told me so much about my captain, and the horrid cruelties which he had practised, that I had some doubts whether I had not better set off home again. When I asked their opinion, they said, that if I did, I should be taken up as a deserter and hanged ; that my best plan was to beg his acceptance of a few gallons of rum, for he was very fond of grog, and, that then I might perhaps be in his good graces as long as the rum might last.

I am sorry to state that the midshipmen made me very tipsy that evening. I don't recollect being put to bed, but I found myself there the next morning with a dreadful headache, and a very confused recollection of what had passed. I was very much shocked at my having so soon forgotten the injunctions of my parents, and was making vows never to be so foolish again, when in came the midshipman who had been so kind to me the night before. 'Come, Mr. Bottlegreen,' he bawled out, alluding, I suppose, to the colour of my clothes, 'rouse and bitt. There's the captain's coxswain waiting for you below. By the powers, you're in a pretty scrape for what you did last night !'

'Did last night !' replied I, astonished. 'Why, does the captain know that I was tipsy ?'

‘I think you took devilish good care to let him know it when you were at the theatre.’

‘At the theatre! Was I at the theatre?’

‘To be sure you were. You would go, do all we could to prevent you, though you were as drunk as David’s sow. Your captain was there with the admiral’s daughters. You called him a tyrant, and snapped your fingers at him. Why, don’t you recollect? You told him that you did not care a fig for him.’

‘O dear! O dear! what shall I do? what shall I do?’ cried I. ‘My mother cautioned me so about drinking and bad company.’

‘Bad company, you whelp—what do you mean by that?’

‘O I did not particularly refer to you.’

‘I should hope not! However, I recommend you as a friend, to go to the George Inn as fast as you can, and see your captain, for the longer you stay away, the worse it will be for you. At all events, it will be decided whether he receives you or not. It is fortunate for you that you are not on the ship’s books. Come, be quick, the coxswain is gone back.’

‘Not on the ship’s books,’ replied I sorrowfully. ‘Now I recollect, there was a letter from the captain to my father, stating that he had put me on the books.’

‘Upon my honour, I’m sorry—very sorry indeed,’ replied the midshipman;—and he quitted the room, looking as grave as if the misfortune had happened to himself. I got up with a heavy head, and heavier heart, and as soon as I was dressed, I asked the way to the

George Inn. I took my letter of introduction with me, although I was afraid it would be of little service. When I arrived, I asked, with a trembling voice, whether Captain Thomas Kirkwall Savage, of H.M. ship *Diomedé*, was staying there. The waiter replied, that he was at breakfast with Captain Courtney, but that he would take up my name. I gave it him, and in a minute the waiter returned and desired that I would walk up. O how my heart beat ! —I never was so frightened—I thought I should have dropped on the stairs. Twice I attempted to walk into the room, and each time my legs failed me ; at last I wiped the perspiration from my forehead, and with a desperate effort I went into the room.

‘ Mr. Simple, I am glad to see you,’ said a voice. I had held my head down, for I was afraid to look at him, but the voice was so kind that I mustered up courage ; and, when I did look up, there sat with his uniform and epaulets, and his sword by his side, the passenger in the plaid cloak, who wanted to open my letter, and whom I had told to his face, that he was *no gentleman*.

I thought I should have died, as the other midshipman did upon his chest. I was just sinking down upon my knees to beg for mercy, when the captain perceiving my confusion, burst out into a laugh, and said, ‘ So you know me again, Mr. Simple ? Well, don’t be alarmed ; you did your duty in not permitting me to open the letter, supposing me, as you did, to be some other person, and you were

perfectly right under that supposition to tell me that I was not a gentleman. I give you credit for your conduct. Now sit down and take some breakfast.'

'Captain Courtney,' said he to the other captain, who was at the table, 'this is one of my youngsters just entering the service. We were passengers yesterday by the same coach.' He then told him the circumstance which occurred, at which they laughed heartily.

I now recovered my spirits a little—but still there was the affair at the theatre, and I thought that perhaps he did not recognize me. I was, however, soon relieved from my anxiety by the other captain inquiring, 'Were you at the theatre last night, Savage?'

'No; I dined at the admiral's; there's no getting away from those girls, they are so pleasant.'

'I rather think you are a little—*taken* in that quarter.'

'No, on my word! I might be, if I had time to discover which I liked best; but my ship is at present my wife, and the only wife I intend to have until I am laid on the shelf.'

Well, thought I, if he was not at the theatre, it could not have been him that I insulted. Now if I can only give him the rum, and make friends with him.

'Pray, Mr. Simple, how are your father and mother?' said the captain.

'Very well, I thank you, sir, and desire me to present their compliments.'

'I am obliged to them. Now I think the

sooner you go on board and learn your duty the better.’ (Just what the midshipman told me—the very words, thought I—then it’s all true—and I began to tremble again.)

‘I have a little advice to offer you,’ continued the captain. ‘In the first place, obey your superior officers without hesitation ; it is for me, not you, to decide whether an order is unjust or not. In the next place, never swear or drink spirits. The first is immoral and ungentlemanlike, the second is a vile habit which will grow upon you. I never touch spirit myself, and I expect that my young gentlemen will refrain from it also. Now you may go, and as soon as your uniforms arrive, you will repair on board. In the mean time, as I had some little insight into your character when we travelled together, let me recommend you not to be too intimate at first sight with those you meet, or you may be led into indiscretions. Good morning.’

I quitted the room with a low bow, glad to have surmounted so easily what appeared to be a chaos of difficulty ; but my mind was confused with the testimony of the midshipman, so much at variance with the language and behaviour of the captain. When I arrived at the Blue Posts, I found all the midshipmen in the coffee-room, and I repeated to them all that had passed. When I had finished, they burst out laughing, and said that they had only been joking with me. ‘Well,’ said I to the one who had called me up in the morning, ‘you may call it joking, but I call it lying.’

‘ Pray, Mr. Bottlegreen, do you refer to me ? ’

‘ Yes, I do,’ replied I.

‘ Then, sir, as a gentleman, I demand satisfaction. Slugs in a saw-pit. Death before dishonour, d——e ! ’

‘ I shall not refuse you,’ replied I, ‘ although I had rather not fight a duel ; my father cautioned me on the subject, desiring me, if possible, to avoid it, as it was flying in the face of my Creator ; but, aware that I must uphold my character as an officer, he left me to my own discretion, should I ever be so unfortunate as to be in such a dilemma.’

‘ Well, we don’t want one of your father’s sermons at second-hand,’ replied the midshipman, (for I had told them that my father was a clergyman,) ‘ the plain question is, will you fight, or will you not ? ’

‘ Could not the affair be arranged otherwise ? ’ interrupted another. ‘ Will not Mr. Bottlegreen retract ? ’

‘ My name is Simple, sir, and not Bottlegreen,’ replied I ; ‘ and as he did tell a falsehood, I will not retract.’

‘ Then the affair must go on,’ said the midshipman. ‘ Robinson, will you oblige me by acting as my second ? ’

‘ It’s an unpleasant business,’ replied the other, ‘ you are so good a shot ; but as you request it, I shall not refuse. Mr. Simple is not, I believe, provided with a friend.’

‘ Yes, he is,’ replied another of the midshipmen. ‘ He is a spunky fellow, and I’ll be his second.’

It was then arranged that we should meet the next morning with pistols. I considered that as an officer and a gentleman, I could not well refuse, but I was very unhappy. Not three days left to my own guidance, and I had become intoxicated, and was now to fight a duel. I went up into my room and wrote a long letter to my mother, inclosing a lock of my hair ; and having shed a few tears at the idea, of how sorry she would be if I were killed, I borrowed a bible from the waiter, and read it during the remainder of the day.

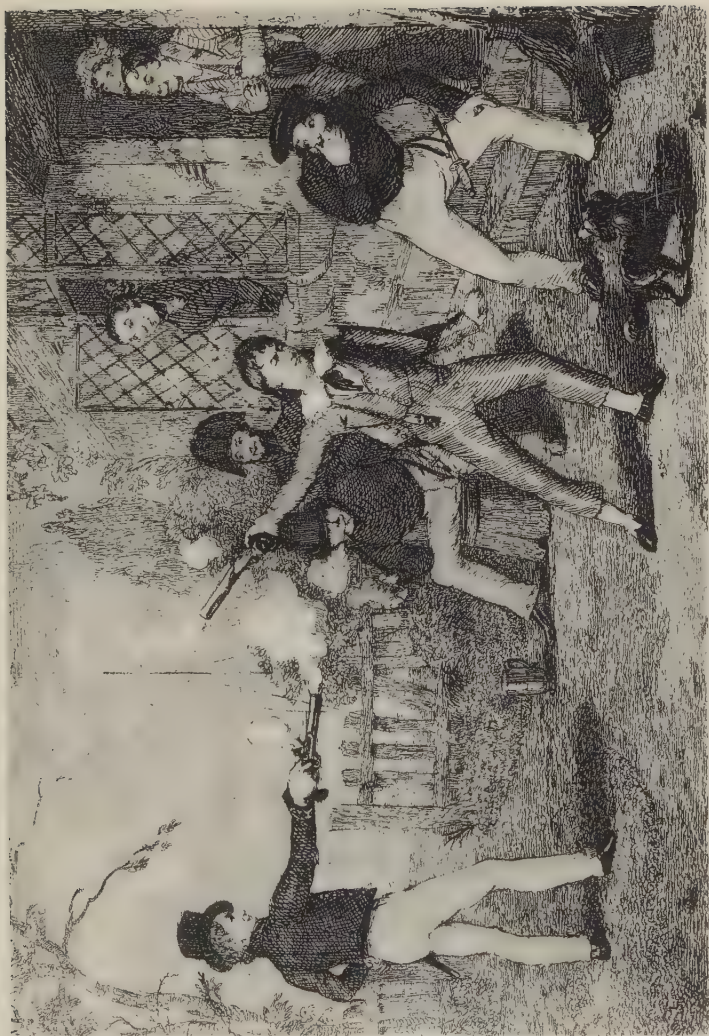
CHAPTER IV

I am taught on a cold morning, before breakfast, how to stand fire, and thus prove my courage—After breakfast I also prove my gallantry—My proof meets reproof—Women at the bottom of all mischief—By one I lose my liberty, and, by another, my *money*.

WHEN I began to wake the next morning, I could not think what it was that felt like a weight upon my chest, but as I roused and recalled my scattered thoughts, I remembered that in an hour or two it would be decided whether I were to exist another day. I prayed fervently, and made a resolution in my own mind, that I would not have the blood of another upon my conscience, and would fire my pistol up in the air. And after I had made that resolution, I no longer felt the alarm which I did before. Before I was dressed, the midshipman who had volunteered to be my second, came into my room and informed me that the affair was to be decided in the garden behind the inn ; that my adversary was a very good shot, and that I must expect to be winged if not drilled. 🍷

‘ And what is winged and drilled ? ’ inquired I ; ‘ I have not only never fought a duel, but I have not even fired a pistol in my life.’

He explained what he meant, which was, that being winged implied being shot through



The Midshipmen's Duel

the arm or leg, whereas being drilled was to be shot through the body. 'But,' continued he, 'is it possible that you have never fought a duel?'

'No,' replied I, 'I am not yet fifteen years old.'

'Not fifteen ! why I thought you were eighteen at the least.' (But I was very tall and stout for my age, and people generally thought me older than I actually was.)

I dressed myself and followed my second into the garden, where I found all the midshipmen and some of the waiters of the inn. They all seemed very merry, as if the life of a fellow-creature was of no consequence. The seconds talked apart for a little while, and then measured the ground, which was twelve paces ; we then took our stations. I believe that I turned pale, for my second came to my side and whispered that I must not be frightened. I replied, that I was not frightened, but that I considered that it was an awful moment. The second to my adversary then came up and asked me whether I would make an apology, which I refused to do as before : they handed a pistol to each of us, and my second showed me how I was to pull the trigger. It was arranged that at the word given, we were to fire at the same time. I made sure that I should be wounded, if not killed, and I shut my eyes as I fired my pistol in the air. I felt my head swim, and thought I was hurt, but fortunately I was not. The pistols were loaded again, and we fired a second time. The

seconds then interfered, and it was proposed that we should shake hands, which I was very glad to do, for I considered my life to have been saved by a miracle. We all went back to the coffee-room, and sat down to breakfast. They then told me that they all belonged to the same ship that I did, and that they were glad to see that I could stand fire, for the captain was a terrible fellow for cutting out and running under the enemy's batteries.

The next day my chest arrived by the waggon, and I threw off my 'bottle-greens' and put on my uniform. I had no cocked hat, or dirk, as the warehouse people employed by Mr. Handycock did not supply those articles. and it was arranged that I should procure them at Portsmouth. When I inquired the price, I found that they cost more money than I had in my pocket, so I tore up the letter I had written to my mother before the duel, and wrote another asking for a remittance to purchase my dirk and cocked-hat. I then walked out in my uniform, not a little proud, I must confess. I was now an officer in his Majesty's service, not very high in rank certainly, but still an officer and a gentleman, and I made a vow that I would support the character, although I was considered the greatest fool of the family.

I had arrived opposite a place called Sally Port, when a young lady very nicely dressed, looked at me very hard and said, 'Well, Reefer, how are you off for soap?' I was astonished at the question, and more so at the



"How are you off for Soap?"

interest which she seemed to take in my affairs. I answered, ‘ Thank you, I am very well off ; I have four cakes of Windsor, and two bars of yellow for washing.’ She laughed at my reply, and asked me whether I would walk home and take a bit of dinner with her. I was astonished at this polite offer, which my modesty induced me to ascribe more to my uniform than to my own merits, and, as I felt no inclination to refuse the compliment, I said that I should be most happy. I thought I might venture to offer my arm, which she accepted, and we proceeded up High Street on our way to her home.

Just as we passed the admiral’s house, I perceived my captain walking with two of the admiral’s daughters. I was not a little proud to let him see that I had female acquaintances as well as he had, and, as I passed him with the young lady under my protection, I took off my hat, and made him a low bow. To my surprise, not only did he not return the salute, but he looked at me with a very stern countenance. I concluded that he was a very proud man, and did not wish the admiral’s daughters to suppose that he knew midshipmen by sight ; but I had not exactly made up my mind on the subject, when the captain, having seen the ladies into the admiral’s house, sent one of the messengers after me to desire that I would immediately come to him at the George Inn, which was nearly opposite.

I apologized to the young lady, and promised to return immediately if she would wait for me ;

but she replied, if that was my captain, it was her idea that I should have a confounded wiggling and be sent on board. So, wishing me good-bye, she left me and continued her way home. I could as little comprehend all this as why the captain looked so black when I passed him ; but it was soon explained when I went up to him in the parlour at the George Inn. ‘I am sorry, Mr. Simple,’ said the captain, when I entered, ‘that a lad like you should show such early symptoms of depravity ; still more so, that he should not have the grace which even the most hardened are not wholly destitute of—I mean to practise immorality in secret, and not degrade themselves and insult their captain by unblushingly avowing (I may say glorying in) their iniquity, by exposing it in broad day, and in the most frequented street of the town.’

‘Sir !’ replied I, with astonishment, ‘O dear ! what have I done ?’

The captain fixed his keen eyes upon me, so that they appeared to pierce me through, and nail me to the wall. ‘Do you pretend to say, sir, that you were not aware of the character of the person with whom you were walking just now ?’

‘No, sir,’ replied I, ‘except that she was very kind and good-natured’ ; and then I told him how she had addressed me, and what subsequently took place.

‘And is it possible, Mr. Simple, that you are so great a fool ?’ I replied that I certainly was considered the greatest fool of our family.

‘I should think you were,’ replied he, drily. He then explained to me who the person was with whom I was in company, and how any association with her would inevitably lead to my ruin and disgrace.

I cried very much, for I was shocked at the narrow escape which I had had, and mortified at having fallen in his good opinion. He asked me how I had employed my time since I had been at Portsmouth, and I made an acknowledgment of having been made tipsy, related all that the midshipmen had told me, and how I had that morning fought a duel.

He listened to my whole story very attentively, and I thought that occasionally there was a smile upon his face, although he bit his lips to prevent it. When I had finished, he said, ‘Mr. Simple, I can no longer trust you on shore until you are more experienced in the world. I shall desire my coxswain not to lose sight of you until you are safe on board of the frigate. When you have sailed a few months with me, you will then be able to decide whether I deserve the character which the young gentlemen have painted, with, I must say, I believe, the sole intention of practising upon your inexperience.’

Altogether I did not feel sorry when it was over. I saw that the captain believed what I had stated, and that he was disposed to be kind to me, although he thought me very silly. The coxswain, in obedience to his orders, accompanied me to the Blue Posts. I packed up my clothes, paid my bill, and the porter wheeled

my chest down to the Sally Port, where the boat was waiting.

‘Come, heave a-head, my lads, be smart. The captain says we are to take the young gentleman on board directly. His liberty’s stopped for getting drunk and running after the Dolly Mops!’

‘I should thank you to be more respectful in your remarks, Mr. Coxswain,’ said I with displeasure.

‘Mister Coxswain! thanky, sir, for giving me a handle to my name,’ replied he. ‘Come, be smart with your oars, my lads!’

‘La, Bill Freeman,’ said a young woman on the beach, ‘what a nice young gentleman you have there. He looks like a sucking Nelson. I say, my pretty young officer, could you lend me a shilling?’

I was so pleased at the woman calling me young Nelson, that I immediately complied with her request. ‘I have not a shilling in my pocket,’ said I, ‘but here is half-a-crown, and you can change it, and bring me back the eighteen-pence.’

‘Well, you are a nice young man,’ replied she, taking the half-crown, ‘I’ll be back directly, my dear.’

The men in the boat laughed, and the coxswain desired them to shove off.

‘No,’ observed I, ‘you must wait for my eighteen-pence.’

‘We shall wait a devilish long while, then, I suspect. I know that girl, and she has a very bad memory.’

‘She cannot be so dishonest or ungrateful,’ replied I. ‘Coxswain, I order you to stay—I am an officer.’

‘I know you are, sir, about six hours old ; well, then, I must go up and tell the captain that you have another girl in tow, and that you won’t go on board.’

‘O no, Mr. Coxswain, pray don’t ; shove off as soon as you please, and never mind the eighteen-pence.’

The boat then shoved off, and pulled towards the ship, which lay at Spithead.

CHAPTER V

I am introduced to the quarter-deck, and first lieutenant, who pronounces me very clever—Trotted below to Mrs. Trotter—Connubial bliss in a cock-pit—Mrs. Trotter *takes me in*, as a messmate—Feel very much surprised that so many people know that I am the son of—my father.

ON our arrival on board, the coxswain gave a note from the captain to the first lieutenant, who happened to be on deck. He read the note, looked at me earnestly, and then I overheard him say to another lieutenant, ‘The service is going to the devil. As long as it was not popular, if we had not much education, we at least had the chance that natural abilities gave us ; but now that great people send their sons for a provision into the navy, we have all the refuse of their families, as if anything was good enough to make a captain of a man-of-war, who has occasionally more responsibility on his shoulders, and is placed in situations requiring more judgment, than any other people in existence. Here’s another of the fools of a family made a present of to the country—another cub for me to lick into shape. Well, I never saw the one yet I did not make something of. Where’s Mr. Simple ?’

‘I am Mr. Simple, sir,’ replied I, very much frightened at what I had overheard.

‘Now, Mr. Simple,’ said the first lieutenant,

‘observe, and pay particular attention to what I say. The captain tells me in this note that you have been shamming stupid. Now, sir, I am not to be taken in that way. You’re something like the monkeys, who won’t speak because they are afraid they will be made to work. I have looked attentively at your face, and I see at once that you are *very clever*, and if you do not prove so in a very short time, why—you had better jump overboard, that’s all. Perfectly understand me. I know that you are a very clever fellow, and having told you so, don’t you pretend to impose upon me, for it won’t do.’

I was very much terrified at this speech, but at the same time I was pleased to hear that he thought me clever, and I determined to do all in my power to keep up such an unexpected reputation.

‘Quarter-master,’ said the first lieutenant, ‘tell Mr. Trotter to come on deck.’

The quarter-master brought up Mr. Trotter, who apologized for being so dirty, as he was breaking casks out of the hold. He was a short, thick-set man, about thirty years of age, with a nose which had a red club to it, very dirty teeth, and large black whiskers.

‘Mr. Trotter,’ said the first lieutenant, ‘here is a young gentleman who has joined the ship. Introduce him into the berth, and see his hammock slung. You must look after him a little.’

‘I really have very little time to look after any of them, sir,’ replied Mr. Trotter, ‘but I will do what I can. Follow me, youngster.’

Accordingly, I descended the ladder after him ; then I went down another, and then to my surprise I was desired by him to go down a third, which, when I had done, he informed me that I was in the cock-pit.

‘ Now, youngster,’ said Mr. Trotter, seating himself upon a large chest, ‘ you may do as you please. The midshipmen’s mess is on the deck above this, and if you like to join, why you can ; but this I will tell you as a friend, that you will be thrashed all day long, and fare very badly ; the weakest always goes to the wall there, but perhaps you do not mind that. Now that we are in harbour, I mess here because Mrs. Trotter is on board. She is a very charming woman, I can assure you, and will be here directly ; she has just gone up into the galley to look after a net of potatoes in the copper. If you like it better, I will ask her permission for you to mess with us. You will then be away from the midshipmen, who are a sad set, and will teach you nothing but what is immoral and improper, and you will have the advantage of being in good society, for Mrs. Trotter has kept the very best in England. I make you this offer because I want to oblige the first lieutenant, who appears to take an interest about you, otherwise I am not very fond of having any intrusion upon my domestic happiness.’

I replied that I was much obliged to him for his kindness, and that if it would not put Mrs. Trotter to an inconvenience, I should be happy to accept of his offer ; indeed, I thought myself very fortunate in having met with such a friend.



Mrs. Trotter's Angle

I had scarcely time to reply, when I perceived a pair of legs, cased in black cotton stockings, on the ladder above us, and it proved that they belonged to Mrs. Trotter, who came down the ladder with a net full of smoking potatoes.

‘Upon my word, Mrs. Trotter, you must be conscious of having a very pretty ancle, or you would not venture to display it, as you have to Mr. Simple, a young gentleman whom I beg to introduce to you, and who, with your permission, will join our mess.’

‘My dear Trotter, how cruel of you not to give me warning ; I thought that nobody was below. I declare I’m so ashamed,’ continued the lady, simpering, and covering her face with the hand which was unemployed.

‘It can’t be helped now, my love, neither was there anything to be ashamed of. I trust Mr. Simple and you will be very good friends. I believe I mentioned his desire to join our mess.’

‘I am sure I shall be very happy in his company. This is a strange place for me to live in, Mr. Simple, after the society to which I have been accustomed ; but affection can make any sacrifice ; and rather than lose the company of my dear Trotter, who has been unfortunate in pecuniary matters——’

‘Say no more about it, my love. Domestic happiness is everything, and will enliven even the gloom of a cock-pit.’

‘And yet,’ continued Mrs. Trotter, ‘when I think of the time when we used to live in London, and keep our carriage. Have you ever been in London, Mr. Simple ?’

I answered that I had.

‘Then, probably, you may have been acquainted with, or have heard of, the Smiths.’

I replied that the only people that I knew there, were a Mr. and Mrs. Handycrack.

‘Well, if I had known that you were in London, I should have been very glad to have given you a letter of introduction to the Smiths. They are quite the topping people of the place.’

‘But, my dear,’ interrupted Mr. Trotter, ‘is it not time to look after our dinner?’

‘Yes ; I am going forward for it now. We have skewer pieces to-day. Mr. Simple, will you excuse me?’—and then, with a great deal of flirtation and laughing about her ancles, and requesting me, as a favour, to turn my face away, Mrs. Trotter ascended the ladder.

As the reader may wish to know what sort of looking personage she was, I will take this opportunity to describe her. Her figure was very good, and at one period of her life I thought her face must have been very handsome : at the time I was introduced to her, it showed the ravages of time or hardship very distinctly ; in short, she might be termed a faded beauty, flaunting in her dress, and not very clean in her person.

‘Charming woman, Mrs. Trotter, is she not, Mr. Simple?’ said the master’s mate ; to which of course I immediately acquiesced. ‘Now, Mr. Simple,’ continued he, ‘there are a few arrangements which I had better mention while Mrs. Trotter is away, for she would be shocked at our talking about such things. Of course,

the style of living which we indulge in is rather expensive. Mrs. Trotter cannot dispense with her tea and her other little comforts ; at the same time I must put you to no extra expense—I had rather be out of pocket myself. I propose that during the time you mess with us, you shall only pay one guinea per week ; and, as for entrance money, why I think I must not charge you more than a couple of guineas. Have you any money ? ’

‘ Yes,’ I replied, ‘ I have three guineas and a half left.’

‘ Well, then, give me the three guineas, and the half-guinea you can reserve for pocket-money. You must write to your friends immediately for a further supply.’

I handed him the money, which he put in his pocket. ‘ Your chest,’ continued he, ‘ you shall bring down here, for Mrs. Trotter will, I am sure, if I request it, not only keep it in order for you, but see that your clothes are properly mended. She is a charming woman, Mrs. Trotter, and very fond of young gentlemen. How old are you ? ’

I replied that I was fifteen.

‘ No more ! well, I am glad of that, for Mrs. Trotter is very particular after a certain age. I should recommend you on no account to associate with the other midshipmen. They are very angry with me, because I would not permit Mrs. Trotter to join their mess, and they are sad story-tellers.’

‘ That they certainly are,’ replied I ; but here we were interrupted by Mrs. Trotter

coming down with a piece of stick in her hand, upon which were skewered about a dozen small pieces of beef and pork, which she first laid on a plate, and then began to lay the cloth, and prepare for dinner.

‘Mr. Simple is only fifteen, my dear,’ observed Mr. Trotter.

‘Dear me,’ replied Mrs. Trotter, ‘why, how tall he is ! He is quite as tall, for his age, as young Lord Foutretown, whom you used to take out with you in the *chay*. Do you know Lord Foutretown, Mr. Simple ?’

‘No, I do not, ma’am,’ replied I ; but wishing to let them know that I was well connected, I continued, ‘but I dare say that my grandfather, Lord Privilege, does.’

‘God bless me ! is Lord Privilege your grandfather ? Well, I thought I saw a likeness somewhere. Don’t you recollect Lord Privilege, my dear Trotter, that we met at Lady Scamp’s—an elderly person ? It’s very ungrateful of you not to recollect him, for he sent you a very fine haunch of venison.’

‘Privilege—bless me, yes. O yes ! an old gentleman, is he not ?’ said Mr. Trotter, appealing to me.

‘Yes, sir,’ replied I, quite delighted to find myself among those who were acquainted with my family.

‘Well, then, Mr. Simple,’ said Mrs. Trotter, ‘since we have the pleasure of being acquainted with your family, I shall now take you under my own charge, and I shall be so fond of you, that Trotter shall become quite jealous,’ added

she, laughing. 'We have but a poor dinner to-day, for the bumboat woman disappointed me. I particularly requested her to bring me off a leg of lamb, but she says that there was none in the market. It is rather early for it, that's true, but Trotter is very nice in his eating. Now let us sit down to dinner.'

I felt very sick indeed, and could eat nothing. Our dinner consisted of the pieces of beef and pork, the potatoes, and a baked pudding in a tin dish. Mr. Trotter went up to serve the spirits out to the ship's company, and returned with a bottle of rum.

'Have you got Mr. Simple's allowance, my love?' inquired Mrs. Trotter.

'Yes, he is victualled to-day, as he came on board before twelve o'clock. Do you drink spirits, Mr. Simple?'

'No, I thank you,' replied I, for I remembered the captain's injunction.

'Taking, as I do, such an interest in your welfare, I must earnestly recommend you to abstain from them,' said Mr. Trotter. 'It is a very bad habit, and once acquired, not easy to be left off. I am obliged to drink them that I may not check the perspiration after working in the hold: I have, nevertheless, a natural abhorrence of them; but my champagne and claret days are gone by, and I must submit to circumstances.'

'My poor Trotter!' said the lady.

'Well,' continued he, 'it's a poor heart that never rejoiceth.' He then poured out half a tumbler of rum, and filled the glass up with water.

‘ My love, will you taste it ? ’

‘ Now, Trotter, you know that I never touch it, except when the water is so bad, that I must have the taste taken away. How is the water to-day ? ’

‘ As usual, my dear, not drinkable.’ After much persuasion, Mrs. Trotter agreed to sip a little out of his glass. I thought that she took it pretty often, considering that she did not like it, but I felt so unwell that I was obliged to go on the main-deck. There I was met by a midshipman whom I had not seen before. He looked very earnestly in my face, and then asked my name. ‘ Simple ? ’ said he ; ‘ what, are you the son of old Simple ? ’

‘ Yes, sir,’ replied I, astonished that so many should know my family. ‘ Well, I thought so by the likeness. And how is your father ? ’

‘ Very well, I thank you, sir.’

‘ When you write to him, make my compliments, and tell him that I desired to be particularly remembered to him ’ : and he walked forward, but as he forgot to mention his own name, I could not do it.

I went to bed very tired ; Mr. Trotter had my hammock hung up in the cock-pit, separated by a canvas screen from the cot in which he slept with his wife. I thought this very odd, but they told me it was the general custom on board ship, although Mrs. Trotter’s delicacy was very much shocked by it. I was very sick, but Mrs. Trotter was very kind. When I was in bed she kissed me, and wished me good night, and very soon afterwards I fell fast asleep.

CHAPTER VI

Puzzled with very common words—Mrs. Trotter *takes care* of my wardrobe—a matrimonial duet, ending *con strepito*.

I AWOKE the next morning at daylight with a noise over my head which sounded like thunder ; I found it proceeded from holystoning and washing down the main-deck. I was very much refreshed nevertheless, and did not feel the least sick or giddy. Mr. Trotter, who had been up at four o'clock, came down and directed one of the marines to fetch me some water. I washed myself on my chest, and then went on the main-deck, which they were swabbing dry. Standing by the sentry at the cabin door, I met one of the midshipmen with whom I had been in company at the Blue Posts.

‘ So, Master Simple, old Trotter and his faggot of a wife have got hold of you—have they ? ’ said he. I replied, that I did not know the meaning of faggot, but that I considered Mrs. Trotter a very charming woman. At which he burst out into a loud laugh. ‘ Well,’ said he, ‘ I’ll just give you a caution. Take care, or they’ll make a clean sweep. Has Mrs. Trotter shown you her ankle yet ? ’

‘ Yes,’ I replied, ‘ and a very pretty one it is.’

‘ Ah ! she’s at her old tricks. You had much better have joined our mess at once. You’re

not the first greenhorn that they have plucked. Well,' said he, as he walked away, 'keep the key of your own chest—that's all.'

But as Mr. Trotter had warned me that the midshipmen would abuse them, I paid very little attention to what he said. When he left me I went on the quarter-deck. All the sailors were busy at work, and the first lieutenant cried out to the gunner, 'Now, Mr. Dispart, if you are ready, we'll breech these guns.'

'Now, my lads,' said the first lieutenant, 'we must slue (the part the breeches cover) more forward.' As I never heard of a gun having breeches, I was very anxious to see what was going on, and went up close to the first lieutenant, who said to me, 'Youngster, hand me that *monkey's tail*.' I saw nothing like a *monkey's tail*, but I was so frightened that I snatched up the first thing that I saw, which was a short bar of iron, and it so happened that it was the very article which he wanted. When I gave it to him, the first lieutenant looked at me, and said, 'So you know what a monkey's tail is already, do you? Now don't you ever sham stupid after that.'

Thought I to myself, I'm very lucky, but if that's a monkey's tail it's a very stiff one!

I resolved to learn the names of everything as fast as I could, that I might be prepared, so I listened attentively to what was said; but I soon became quite confused, and despaired of remembering anything.

'How is this to be finished off, sir?' inquired a sailor of the boatswain.

‘Why, I beg leave to hint to you, sir, in the most delicate manner in the world,’ replied the boatswain, ‘that it must be with a *double wall*—and be d——d to you—don’t you know that yet? Captain of the foretop,’ said he, ‘up on your *horses*, and take your *stirrups* up three inches.’—‘Aye, aye, sir.’ (I looked and looked, but I could see no horses.)

‘Mr. Chucks,’ said the first lieutenant to the boatswain, ‘what blocks have we below—not on charge?’

‘Let me see, sir, I’ve one *sister*, t’other we split in half the other day, and I think I have a couple of *monkeys* down in the store-room.—I say, you Smith, pass that brace through the *bull’s eye*, and take the *sheepshank* out before you come down.’

And then he asked the first lieutenant whether something should not be fitted with a *mouse* or only a *turk’s head*—told him the *goose-neck* must be spread out by the armourer as soon as the forge was up. In short, what with *dead-eyes* and *shrouds*, *cats* and *catblocks*, *dolphins* and *dolphin-strikers*, *whips* and *puddings*, I was so puzzled with what I heard, that I was about to leave the deck in absolute despair.

‘And, Mr. Chucks, recollect this afternoon that you *bleed* all the *buoys*.’

Bleed the boys! thought I, what can that be for? at all events, the surgeon appears to be the proper person to perform that operation.

This last incomprehensible remark drove me off the deck, and I retreated to the cock-pit, where I found Mrs. Trotter. ‘O my dear!’

said she, 'I am glad you are come, as I wish to put your clothes in order. Have you a list of them—where is your key?' I replied that I had not a list, and I handed her the key, although I did not forget the caution of the midshipman; yet I considered that there could be no harm in her looking over my clothes when I was present. She unlocked my chest, and pulled everything out, and then commenced telling me what were likely to be useful, and what were not.

'Now these worsted stockings,' she said, 'will be very comfortable in cold weather, and in the summer time these brown cotton socks will be delightfully cool, and you have enough of each to last you till you outgrow them; but as for these fine cotton stockings, they are of no use—only catch the dirt when the decks are swept, and always look untidy. I wonder how they could be so foolish as to send them; nobody wears them on board ship now-a-days. They are only fit for women—I wonder if they would fit me.' She turned her chair away, and put on one of my stockings, laughing the whole of the time. Then she turned round to me and showed me how nicely they fitted her. 'Bless you, Mr. Simple, it's well that Trotter is in the hold, he'd be so jealous—do you know what these stockings cost? They are of no use to you, and they fit me. I will speak to Trotter, and take them off your hands.' I replied, that I could not think of selling them, and as they were of no use to me and fitted her, I begged that she would accept of the dozen pairs. At

first she positively refused, but as I pressed her she at last consented, and I was very happy to give them to her as she was very kind to me, and I thought, with her husband, that she was a very charming woman.

We had beef-steaks and onions for dinner that day, but I could not bear the smell of the onions. Mr. Trotter came down very cross, because the first lieutenant had found fault with him. He swore that he would cut the service—that he had only remained to oblige the captain, who said that he would sooner part with his right arm, and that he would demand satisfaction of the first lieutenant as soon as he could obtain his discharge. Mrs. Trotter did all she could to pacify him, reminded him that he had the protection of Lord this and Sir Thomas that, who would see him righted ; but in vain. The first lieutenant had told him, he said, that he was not worth his salt, and blood only could wipe away the insult. He drank glass of grog after glass of grog, and at each glass became more violent ; and Mrs. Trotter drank also, I observed, a great deal more than I thought she ought to have done ; but she whispered to me, that she drank it that Trotter might not, as he would certainly be tipsy. I thought this very devoted on her part ; but they sat so late that I went to bed and left them—he still drinking and vowing vengeance against the first lieutenant. I had not been asleep above two or three hours, when I was awakened by a great noise and quarrelling, and I discovered that Mr. Trotter was drunk and

beating his wife. Very much shocked that such a charming woman should be beaten and ill used, I scrambled out of my hammock to see if I could be of any assistance, but it was dark, although they scuffled as much as before. I asked the marine, who was sentry at the gun-room door above, to bring his lanthorn, and was very much shocked at his replying that I had better go to bed and let them fight it out.

Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Trotter, who had not taken off her clothes, came from behind the screen. I perceived at once that the poor woman could hardly stand ; she reeled to my chest, where she sat down and cried. I pulled on my clothes as fast as I could, and then went up to her to console her, but she could not speak intelligibly. After attempting in vain to comfort her, she made me no answer, but staggered to my hammock, and, after several attempts, succeeded in getting into it. I cannot say that I much liked that, but what could I do ? So I finished dressing myself, and went up on the quarter-deck.

The midshipman who had the watch was the one who had cautioned me against the Trotters; he was very friendly to me. ‘ Well, Simple,’ said he, ‘ what brings you on deck ? ’ I told him how ill Mr. Trotter had behaved to his wife, and how she had turned into my hammock.

‘ The cursed drunken old catamaran,’ cried he ; ‘ I’ll go and cut her down by the head ’ : but I requested he would not, as she was a lady.

‘ A lady ! ’ replied he ; ‘ yes, there’s plenty of ladies of her description ’ ; and then he in-

formed me that she had many years ago been the mistress of a man of fortune who kept a carriage for her ; but that he grew tired of her, and had given Trotter £200 to marry her, and that now they did nothing but get drunk together and fight with each other.

I was very much annoyed to hear all this ; but as I perceived that Mrs. Trotter was not sober, I began to think that what the midshipman said was true. ‘ I hope,’ added he, ‘ that she has not had time to wheedle you out of any of your clothes.’

I told him that I had given her a dozen pairs of stockings, and had paid Mr. Trotter three guineas for my mess. ‘ This must be looked to,’ replied he ; ‘ I shall speak to the first lieutenant to-morrow. In the mean time, I shall get your hammock for you. Quarter-master, keep a good look-out.’ He then went below, and I followed him, to see what he would do. He went to my hammock and lowered it down at one end, so that Mrs. Trotter lay with her head on the deck in a very uncomfortable position. To my astonishment, she swore at him in a dreadful manner, but refused to turn out. He was abusing her and shaking her in the hammock, when Mr. Trotter, who had been roused at the noise, rushed from behind the screen. ‘ You villain ! what are you doing with my wife ? ’ cried he, pummelling at him as well as he could, for he was so tipsy that he could hardly stand.

I thought the midshipman able to take care of himself, and did not wish to interfere ; so I remained above, looking on—the sentry standing

by me with his lanthorn over the coombings of the hatchway to give light to the midshipman, and to witness the fray. Mr. Trotter was soon knocked down, when all of a sudden Mrs. Trotter jumped up from the hammock, and caught the midshipman by the hair, and pulled at him. Then the sentry thought right to interfere ; he called out for the master-at-arms, and went down himself to help the midshipman, who was faring badly between the two. But Mrs. Trotter snatched the lanthorn out of his hand and smashed it all to pieces, and then we were all left in darkness, and I could not see what took place, although the scuffling continued. Such was the posture of affairs when the master-at-arms came up with his light. The midshipman and sentry went up the ladder, and Mr. and Mrs. Trotter continued beating each other. To this, none of them paid any attention, saying, as the sentry had said before, ‘ Let them fight it out.’

After they had fought some time, they retired behind the screen, and I followed the advice of the midshipman, and got into my hammock, which the master-at-arms hung up again for me. I heard Mr. and Mrs. Trotter both crying and kissing each other. ‘ Cruel, cruel Mr. Trotter,’ said she, blubbering.

‘ My life, my love, I was so jealous ! ’ replied he.

‘ D—n and blast your jealousy,’ replied the lady ; ‘ I’ve two nice black eyes for the galley to-morrow.’ After about an hour of kissing and scolding, they both fell asleep again.

The next morning before breakfast, the midshipman reported to the first lieutenant the conduct of Mr. Trotter and his wife. I was sent for and obliged to acknowledge that it was all true. He sent for Mr. Trotter, who replied that he was not well, and could not come on deck. Upon which the first lieutenant ordered the serjeant of marines to bring him up directly. Mr. Trotter made his appearance, with one eye closed, and his face very much scratched.

‘Did not I desire you, sir,’ said the first lieutenant, ‘to introduce this young gentleman into the midshipman’s berth? instead of which you have introduced him to that disgraceful wife of yours and have swindled him out of his property. I order you immediately to return the three guineas which you received as mess-money, and also that your wife give back the stockings which she cajoled him out of.’

But then I interposed, and told the first lieutenant that the stockings had been a free gift on my part; and that although I had been very foolish, yet that I considered that I could not in honour demand them back again.

‘Well, youngster,’ replied the first lieutenant, ‘perhaps your ideas are correct, and if you wish it, I will not enforce that part of my order; but,’ continued he to Mr. Trotter, ‘I desire, sir, that your wife leave the ship immediately: and I trust that when I have reported your conduct to the captain, he will serve you in the same manner. In the mean time, you will consider yourself under an arrest for drunkenness.’

CHAPTER VII

Scandalum magnatum clearly proved—I prove to the captain that I consider him a gentleman, although I had told him the contrary, and I prove to the midshipmen that I am a gentleman myself—They prove their gratitude by practising upon me, because practice makes perfect.

THE captain came on board about twelve o'clock, and ordered the discharge of Mr. Trotter to be made out, as soon as the first lieutenant had reported what had occurred. He then sent for all the midshipmen on the quarter-deck.

‘Gentlemen,’ said the captain to them, with a stern countenance, ‘I feel very much indebted to some of you for the character which you have been pleased to give of me to Mr. Simple. I must now request that you will answer a few questions which I am about to put in his presence. Did I ever flog the whole starboard watch, because the ship would only sail nine knots on a bowline!’

‘No, sir, no!’ replied they all, very much frightened.

‘Did I ever give a midshipman four dozen for not having his weekly accounts pipeclayed, or another five dozen for wearing a scarlet watch ribbon?’

‘No, sir,’ replied they all together.

‘Did any midshipman ever die on his chest from fatigue?’

They again replied in the negative.

‘Then, gentlemen, you will oblige me by stating which of you thought proper to assert these falsehoods in a public coffee-room ; and further, which of you obliged this youngster to risk his life in a duel ? ’

They were all silent.

‘Will you answer me, gentlemen ? ’

‘With respect to the duel, sir,’ replied the midshipman who had fought me, ‘I *heard* say, that the pistols were only charged with powder. It was a joke.’

‘Well, sir, we’ll allow that the duel was only a joke (and I hope and trust that your report is correct) ; is the reputation of your captain only a joke, allow me to ask ? I request to know who of you dared to propagate such injurious slander ? ’ (Here there was a dead pause.) ‘Well then, gentlemen, since you will not confess yourselves, I must refer to my authority. Mr. Simple, have the goodness to point out the person or persons who gave you the information.’

But I thought this would not be fair ; and as they had all treated me very kindly after the duel, I resolved not to tell ; so I answered, ‘If you please, sir, I consider that I told you all that in confidence.’

‘Confidence, sir ! ’ replied the captain ; ‘who ever heard of confidence between a post-captain and a midshipman ? ’

‘No, sir,’ replied I, ‘not between a post-captain and a midshipman, but between two gentlemen.’

The first lieutenant, who stood by the captain, put his hand before his face to hide a laugh. 'He may be a fool, sir,' observed he to the captain, aside, 'but I can assure you he is a straight-forward one.'

The captain bit his lip, and then turning to the midshipmen, said, 'You may thank Mr. Simple, gentlemen, that I do not press this matter further. I do believe that you were not serious when you calumniated me ; but recollect that what is said in joke is too often repeated in earnest. I trust that Mr. Simple's conduct will have its effect, and that you will leave off practising upon him, who has saved you from a very severe punishment.'

When the midshipmen went down below they all shook hands with me, and said that I was a good fellow for not peaching : but, as for the advice of the captain that they should not practise upon me, as he termed it, they forgot that, for they commenced again immediately, and never left off until they found that I was not to be deceived any longer.

I had not been ten minutes in the berth, before they began their remarks upon me. One said that I looked like a hardy fellow, and asked me whether I could not bear a great deal of sleep.

I replied that I could, I dare say, if it was necessary for the good of the service ; at which they laughed, and I supposed that I had said a good thing.

'Why, here's Tomkins,' said the midshipman ; 'he'll show you how to perform that

part of your duty. He inherits it from his father, who was a marine officer. He can snore for fourteen hours on a stretch without once turning round in his hammock, and finish his nap on the chest during the whole of the day, except meal-times.'

But Tomkins defended himself, by saying, that 'some people were very quick in doing things, and others were very slow ; that he was one of the slow ones, and that he did not in reality obtain more refreshment from his long naps than other people did in short ones, because he slept much slower than they did.'

This ingenious argument was, however, overruled *nem. con.*, as it was proved that he ate pudding faster than any one in the mess.

The postman came on board with the letters, and put his head into the midshipman's berth. I was very anxious to have one from home, but I was disappointed. Some had letters and some had not. Those who had not, declared that their parents were very undutiful, and that they would cut them off with a shilling ; and those who had letters, after they had read them, offered them for sale to the others, usually at half price. I could not imagine why they sold, or why the others bought them ; but they did do so ; and one that was full of good advice was sold three times, from which circumstance I was inclined to form a better opinion of the morals of my companions. The lowest priced letters sold, were those written by sisters. I was offered one for a penny, but I declined buying, as I had plenty of sisters of my own.

Directly I made that observation they immediately inquired all their names and ages, and whether they were pretty or not. When I had informed them, they quarrelled to whom they should belong. One would have Lucy, and another took Mary ; but there was a great dispute about Ellen, as I had said that she was the prettiest of the whole. At last they agreed to put her up to auction, and she was knocked down to a master's mate of the name of O'Brien, who bid seventeen shillings and a bottle of rum. They requested that I would write home to give their love to my sisters, and tell them how they had been disposed of, which I thought very strange ; but I ought to have been flattered at the price bid for Ellen, as I repeatedly have since been witness to a very pretty sister being sold for a glass of grog.

I mentioned the reason why I was so anxious for a letter, viz. because I wanted to buy my dirk and cocked-hat ; upon which they told me that there was no occasion for my spending my money, as, by the regulations of the service, the purser's steward served them out to all the officers who applied for them. As I knew where the purser's steward's room was, having seen it when down in the cock-pit with the Trotters, I went down immediately. ' Mr. Purser's Steward,' said I, ' let me have a cocked-hat and a dirk immediately.'

' Very good,' sir,' replied he, and he wrote an order upon a slip of paper, which he handed to me. ' There is the order for it, sir ; but the cocked-hats are kept in the chest up in the

main-top ; and as for the dirk, you must apply to the butcher, who has them under his charge.'

I went up with the order, and thought I would first apply for the dirk ; so I inquired for the butcher, whom I found sitting in the sheep-pen with the sheep, mending his trowsers. In reply to my demand, he told me that he had not the key of the store-room, which was under the charge of one of the corporals of marines.

I inquired who, and he said, ' Cheeks,¹ the marine.'

I went everywhere about the ship, inquiring for Cheeks the marine, but could not find him. Some said that they believed he was in the fore-top, standing sentry over the wind, that it might not change ; others, that he was in the galley, to prevent the midshipmen from soaking their biscuits in the captain's dripping-pan. At last, I inquired of some of the women who were standing between the guns on the main-deck, and one of them answered that it was no use looking for him among them, as they all had husbands, and Cheeks was a *widow's man*.²

As I could not find the marine, I thought I might as well go for my cocked-hat, and get my dirk afterwards. I did not much like going up the rigging, because I was afraid of turning giddy, and if I fell overboard I could not swim ;

¹ This celebrated personage is the prototype of Mr. Nobody on board of a man-of-war.

² Widow's men are imaginary sailors borne on the books, and receiving pay and prize-money, which is appropriated to Greenwich Hospital.

but one of the midshipmen offered to accompany me, stating that I need not be afraid, if I fell overboard, of sinking to the bottom, as, if I was giddy, my head, at all events, *would swim* ; so I determined to venture. I climbed up very near to the main-top, but not without missing the little ropes very often, and grazing the skin off my shins. Then I came to large ropes stretched out from the mast, so that you must climb them with your head backwards. The midshipman told me these were called the cat-harpings, because they were so difficult to climb, that a cat would expostulate if ordered to go out by them. I was afraid to venture, and then he proposed that I should go through lubber's hole, which he said had been made for people like me. I agreed to attempt it, as it appeared more easy, and at last arrived, quite out of breath, and very happy to find myself in the main-top.

The captain of the main-top was there with two other sailors. The midshipman introduced me very politely :—‘ Mr. Jenkins—Mr. Simple, midshipman,—Mr. Simple, Mr. Jenkins, captain of the main-top. Mr. Jenkins, Mr. Simple has come up with an order for a cocked-hat.’ The captain of the top replied that he was very sorry that he had not one in store, but the last had been served out to the captain's monkey. This was very provoking. The captain of the top then asked me if I was ready with my *footing*.

I replied, ‘ Not very, for I had lost it two or three times when coming up.’ He laughed and

replied, that I should lose it altogether before I went down ; and that I must *hand* it out. ‘*Hand out my footing !*’ said I, puzzled, and appealing to the midshipman, ‘what does he mean?’ ‘He means that you must fork out a seven-shilling bit.’ I was just as wise as ever, and stared very much ; when Mr. Jenkins desired the other men to get half-a-dozen *foxes* and make a *spread eagle* of me, unless he had his parkisite. I never should have found out what it all meant, had not the midshipman, who laughed till he cried, at last informed me that it was the custom to give the men something to drink the first time that I came aloft, and that if I did not, they would tie me up to the rigging.

Having no money in my pocket, I promised to pay them as soon as I went below ; but Mr. Jenkins would not trust me. I then became very angry, and inquired of him ‘if he doubted my honour.’ He replied, ‘Not in the least, but that he must have the seven shillings before I went below.’ ‘Why, sir,’ said I, ‘do you know whom you are speaking to? I am an officer and a gentleman. Do you know who my grandfather is?’

‘O yes,’ replied he, ‘very well.’

‘Then, who is he, sir?’ replied I, very angrily.

‘Who is he ! why he’s the *Lord knows who*.’

‘No,’ replied I, ‘that’s not his name ; he is Lord Privilege.’ (I was very much surprised that he knew that my grandfather was a lord.)

‘And do you suppose,’ continued I, ‘that I

would forfeit the honour of my family for a paltry seven shillings ? ’

This observation of mine, and a promise on the part of the midshipman, who said he would be bail for me, satisfied Mr. Jenkins, and he allowed me to go down the rigging. I went to my chest, and paid the seven shillings to one of the top-men who followed me, and then went up on the main-deck, to learn as much as I could of my profession. I asked a great many questions of the midshipmen relative to the guns, and they crowded round me to answer them. One told me they were called the frigate’s *teeth*, because they stopped the Frenchman’s *jaw*. Another midshipman said that he had been so often in action that he was called the *Fire-eater*. I asked him how it was that he escaped being killed. He replied that he always made it a rule, upon the first cannon-ball coming through the ship’s side, to put his head into the hole which it had made ; as, by a calculation made by Professor Innman, the odds were 32,647 and some decimals to boot, that another ball would not come in at the same hole. That’s what I never should have thought of.

CHAPTER VIII

My messmates show me the folly of running in debt—
Duty carried on politely—I become acquainted with
some gentlemen of the Home Department—The
Episode of Sholto M'Foy.

Now that I have been on board about a month, I find that my life is not disagreeable. I don't smell the pitch and tar, and I can get into my hammock without tumbling out on the other side. My messmates are good-tempered, although they laugh at me very much ; but I must say that they are not very nice in their ideas of honour. They appear to consider that to take you in is a capital joke : and that because they laugh at the time that they are cheating you, it then becomes no cheating at all. Now I cannot think otherwise than that cheating is cheating, and that a person is not a bit more honest, because he laughs at you in the bargain. A few days after I came on board, I purchased some tarts of the bumboat woman, as she is called ; I wished to pay for them, but she had no change, and very civilly told me she would trust me. She produced a narrow book, and said that she would open an account with me, and I could pay her when I thought proper. To this arrangement I had no objection, and I sent up for different things until I thought that my account must have amounted to eleven or twelve shillings. As I promised

my father that I never would run in debt, I considered that it was then time that it should be settled. When I asked for it, what was my surprise to find that it amounted to 2*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* I declared that it was impossible, and requested that she would allow me to look at the items, when I found that I was booked for at least three or four dozen tarts every day, ordered by the young gentlemen 'to be put down to Mr. Simple's account.' I was very much shocked, not only at the sum of money which I had to pay, but also at the want of honesty on the part of my messmates ; but when I complained of it in the berth, they all laughed at me.

At last one of them said, 'Peter, tell the truth ; did not your father caution you not to run in debt ?'

'Yes, he did,' replied I.

'I know that very well,' replied he : 'all fathers do the same when their sons leave them ; it's a matter of course. Now observe, Peter ; it is out of regard to you, that your messmates have been eating tarts at your expense. You disobeyed your father's injunctions before you had been a month from home ; and it is to give you a lesson that may be useful in after-life, that they have considered it their duty to order the tarts. I trust that it will not be thrown away upon you. Go to the woman, pay your bill, and never run up another.'

'That I certainly shall not,' replied I ; but as I could not prove who ordered the tarts, and did not think it fair that the woman should lose her money, I went up and paid the bill, with a

determination never to open an account with anybody again.

But this left my pockets quite empty, so I wrote to my father, stating the whole transaction, and the consequent state of my finances. My father, in his answer, observed that whatever might have been their motives, my mess-mates had done me a friendly act ; and that as I had lost my money by my own carelessness, I must not expect that he would allow me any more pocket-money. But my mother, who added a postscript to his letter, slipped in a five-pound note, and I do believe that it was with my father's sanction, although he pretended to be very angry at my forgetting his injunctions. This timely relief made me quite comfortable again. What a pleasure it is to receive a letter from one's friends when far away, especially when there's some money in it !

A few days before this, Mr. Falcon, the first lieutenant, ordered me to put on my side-arms to go away on duty. I replied that I had neither dirk nor cocked-hat, although I had applied for them. He laughed at my story, and sent me on shore with the master, who bought them, and the first lieutenant sent up the bill to my father, who paid it, and wrote to thank him for his trouble. That morning, the first lieutenant said to me, 'Now, Mr. Simple, we'll take the shine off that cocked-hat and dirk of yours. You will go in the boat with Mr. O'Brien, and take care that none of the men slip away from it, and get drunk at the tap.'

This was the first time that I had ever been sent away on duty, and I was very proud of being an officer in charge. I put on my full uniform, and was ready at the gangway a quarter of an hour before the men were piped away. We were ordered to the dock-yard to draw sea-stores. When we arrived there, I was quite astonished at the piles of timber, the ranges of storehouses, and the immense anchors which lay on the wharf. There was such a bustle, everybody appeared to be so busy, that I wanted to look every way at once. Close to where the boat landed, they were hauling a large frigate out of what they called the basin ; and I was so interested with the sight, that I am sorry to say, I quite forgot all about the boat's crew, and my orders to look after them. What surprised me most was, that although the men employed appeared to be sailors, their language was very different from what I had been lately accustomed to on board of the frigate. Instead of damning and swearing, everybody was so polite. ' Oblige me with a pull of the starboard bow hawser, Mr. Jones.'—' Ease off the larboard hawser, Mr. Jenkins, if you please.'—' Side her over, gentlemen, side her over.'—' My compliments to Mr. Tompkins, and request that he will cast off the quarter check.'—' Side her over, gentlemen, side her over, if you please.'—' In the boat there, pull to Mr. Simmons, and beg he'll do me the favour to check her as she swings. What's the matter, Mr. Johnson ? ' ' Vy, there's one of them ere midshipmites has thrown a red hot tater out of

the stern-port, and hit our officer in the eye.' — 'Report him to the commissioner, Mr. Wiggins ; and oblige me by under-running the guess warp. Tell Mr. Simpkins, with my compliments, to coil away upon the jetty. Side her over, side her over, gentlemen, if you please.'

I asked of a bystander who these people were, and he told me they were dock-yard mateys. I certainly thought that it appeared to be quite as easy to say, 'If you please,' as 'D—n your eyes,' and that it sounded much more agreeable.

During the time that I was looking at the frigate being hauled out, two of the men belonging to the boat slipped away, and on my return they were not to be seen. I was very much frightened, for I knew that I had neglected my duty, and that on the first occasion on which I had been entrusted with a responsible service. What to do I did not know. I ran up and down every part of the dock-yard until I was quite out of breath, asking everybody I met whether they had seen my two men. Many of them said that they had seen plenty of men, but did not exactly know mine ; some laughed, and called me a greenhorn. At last I met a midshipman, who told me that he had seen two men answering to my description on the roof of the coach starting for London, and that I must be quick if I wished to catch them ; but he would not stop to answer any more questions. I continued walking about the yard until I met twenty or thirty men with grey jackets and breeches, to whom I applied for

information : they told me that they had seen two sailors skulking behind the piles of timber. They crowded round me, and appeared very anxious to assist me, when they were summoned away to carry down a cable. I observed that they all had numbers on their jackets, and either one or two bright iron rings on their legs. I could not help inquiring, although I was in such a hurry, why the rings were worn. One of them replied, that they were orders of merit, given to them for their good behaviour.

I was proceeding on very disconsolately, when, as I turned a corner, to my great delight, I met my two men, who touched their hats and said that they had been looking for me. I did not believe that they told the truth, but I was so glad to recover them that I did not scold, but went with them down to the boat, which had been waiting some time for us. O'Brien, the master's mate, called me a young sculping, a word I never heard before. When we arrived on board, the first lieutenant asked O'Brien why he had remained so long. He answered that two of the men had left the boat, but that I had found them. The first lieutenant appeared to be pleased with me, observing, as he had said before, that I was no fool, and I went down below overjoyed at my good fortune, and very much obliged to O'Brien for not telling the whole truth. After I had taken off my dirk and cocked-hat, I felt for my pocket-handkerchief, and found that it was not in my pocket, having in all probability been taken out by the men in grey jackets, whom, in conversation with

my messmates, I discovered to be convicts condemned to hard labour for stealing and picking pockets.

A day or two afterwards, we had a new messmate of the name of M'Foy. I was on the quarter-deck when he came on board and presented a letter to the captain, inquiring first if his name was 'Captain Sauvage.' He was a florid young man, nearly six feet high, with sandy hair, yet very good-looking. As his career in the service was very short, I will tell at once, what I did not find out till some time afterwards. The captain had agreed to receive him to oblige a brother officer, who had retired from the service, and lived in the Highlands of Scotland. The first notice which the captain had of the arrival of Mr. M'Foy, was from a letter written to him by the young man's uncle. This amused him so much, that he gave it to the first lieutenant to read ; it ran as follows :

' Glasgow, April 25, 1——.

' SIR ;

' Our much esteemed and mutual friend, Captain M'Alpine, having communicated by letter, dated the 14th inst., your kind intentions relative to my nephew, Sholto M'Foy, (for which you will be pleased to accept my best thanks,) I write to acquaint you that he is now on his way to join your ship, the *Diomedé*, and will arrive, God willing, twenty-six hours after the receipt of this letter.

' As I have been given to understand by those who have some acquaintance with the

service of the king, that his equipment as an officer will be somewhat expensive, I have considered it but fair to ease your mind as to any responsibility on that score, and have therefore enclosed the half of a Bank of England note for ten pounds sterling, No. 3742, the other half of which will be duly forwarded in a frank promised to me the day after to-morrow. I beg you will make the necessary purchases, and apply the balance, should there be any, to his mess account, or any other expenses which you may consider warrantable or justifiable.

‘It is at the same time proper to inform you that Sholto had ten shillings in his pocket at the time of his leaving Glasgow ; the satisfactory expenditure of which I have no doubt you will inquire into, as it is a large sum to be placed at the discretion of a youth only fourteen years and five months old. I mention his age, as Sholto is so tall that you might be deceived by his appearance, and be induced to trust to his prudence in affairs of this serious nature. Should he at any time require further assistance beyond his pay, which I am told is extremely handsome to all king’s officers, I beg you to consider that any draft of yours, at ten days’ sight, to the amount of five pounds sterling English, will be duly honoured by the firm of Monteith, M’Killop, and Company, of Glasgow. Sir, with many thanks for your kindness and consideration,

‘I remain, your most obedient,

‘WALTER MONTEITH.’

The letter brought on board by M'Foy was to prove his identity. While the captain read it, M'Foy stared about him like a wild stag. The captain welcomed him to the ship, asked him one or two questions, introduced him to the first lieutenant, and then went on shore. The first lieutenant had asked me to dine in the gun-room ; I supposed that he was pleased with me because I had found the men ; and when the captain pulled on shore, he also invited Mr. M'Foy, when the following conversation took place.

'Well, Mr. M'Foy, you have had a long journey ; I presume it is the first that you have ever made.'

'Indeed it is, sir,' replied M'Foy ; 'and sorely I've been pestered. Had I minded all they whispered in my lug as I came along, I had need been made of money—sax-pence here, sax-pence there, sax-pence everywhere. Sich extortion I ne'er dreamt of.'

'How did you come from Glasgow ?'

'By the wheel-boat, or steam-boat, as they ca'd it, to Lunnon : where they charged me sax-pence for taking my baggage on shore—a wee boxy nae bigger than yon cocked-up hat. I would fain carry it mysel', but they wudna let me.'

'Well, where did you go to when you arrived in London ?'

'I went to a place ca'd Chichester Rents, to the house of Storm and Mainwaring, Warehousemen, and they must have another sax-pence for showing me the way. There I waited

half-an-hour in the counting-house, till they took me to a place ca'd Bull and Mouth, and put me into a coach, paying my whole fare ; nevertheless, they must din me for money the whole of the way down. There was first the guard, and then the coachman, and another guard, and another coachman ; but I wudna listen to them, and so they growled and abused me.'

' And when did you arrive ? '

' I came here last night ; and I only had a bed and a breakfast at the twa Blue Pillars house, for which they extorted me three shillings and sax-pence, as I sit here. And then there was the chambermaid hussy and waiter loon axed me to remember them, and wanted more siller ; but I told them as I told the guard and coachman, that I had none for them.'

' How much of your ten shillings have you left ? ' inquired the first lieutenant, smiling.

' Hoot ; sir lieutenant, how came you for to ken that ? Eh ! it's my uncle Monteith at Glasgow. Why, as I sit here, I've but three shillings and a penny of it left. But there's a smell here that's no canny ; so I'll just go up again into the fresh air.'

When Mr. M'Foy quitted the gun-room they all laughed very much. After he had been a short time on deck, he went down into the midshipmen's berth : but he made himself very unpleasant, quarrelling and wrangling with everybody. It did not, however, last very long : for he would not obey any orders that were given to him. On the third day, he

quitted the ship without asking the permission of the first lieutenant ; when he returned on board the following day, the first lieutenant put him under an arrest, and in charge of the sentry at the cabin door. During the afternoon I was under the half-deck, and perceived that he was sharpening a long clasp knife upon the after truck of the gun. I went up to him and asked him why he was doing so, and he replied, as his eyes flashed fire, that it was to revenge the insult offered to the bluid of M'Foy. His look told me that he was in earnest. ' But what do you mean ? ' inquired I. ' I mean,' said he, drawing the edge and feeling the point of his weapon, ' to put it into the weam of that man with the gold podge on his shoulder, who has dared to place me here.'

I was very much alarmed, and thought it my duty to state his murderous intentions, or worse might happen ; so I walked up on deck and told the first lieutenant what M'Foy was intending to do, and how his life was in danger. Mr. Falcon laughed, and shortly afterwards went down on the main-deck. M'Foy's eyes glistened, and he walked forward to where the first lieutenant was standing ; but the sentry, who had been cautioned by me, kept him back with his bayonet. The first lieutenant turned round, and perceiving what was going on, desired the sentry to see if Mr. M'Foy had a knife in his hands ; and he had it sure enough, open, and held behind his back. He was disarmed, and the first lieutenant, perceiving that the lad meant mischief, reported his conduct to the

captain, on his arrival on board. The captain sent for M'Foy, who was very obstinate, and when taxed with his intention would not deny it, or even say that he would not again attempt it ; so he was sent on shore immediately, and returned to his friends in the Highlands. We never saw any more of him ; but I heard that he obtained a commission in the army, and three months after he had joined his regiment, was killed in a duel, resenting some fancied affront offered to the bluid of M'Foy.

CHAPTER IX

We post up to Portsdown Fair—Consequence of disturbing a lady at supper—Natural affection of the Pelican, proved at my expense—Spontaneous combustion at Ranelagh Gardens—Pastry *versus* Piety—Many are bid to the feast ; but not the halt, the lame, or the blind.

A FEW days after M'Foy quitted the ship, we all had leave from the first lieutenant to go to Portsdown Fair, but he would only allow the oldsters to sleep on shore. We anticipated so much pleasure from our excursion, that some of us were up early enough to go away in the boat sent for fresh beef. This was very foolish. There were no carriages to take us to the fair, nor indeed any fair so early in the morning ; the shops were all shut, and the Blue Posts, where we always rendezvoused, was hardly opened. We waited there in the coffee-room, until we were driven out by the maid sweeping away the dirt, and were forced to walk about until she had finished, and lighted the fire, when we ordered our breakfast ; but how much better would it have been to have taken our breakfast comfortably on board, and then to have come on shore, especially as we had no money to spare. Next to being too late, being too soon is the worst plan in the world. However, we had our breakfast, and paid the bill ; then we sallied forth, and went up George

Street, where we found all sorts of vehicles ready to take us to the fair. We got into one which they called a dilly. I asked the man who drove it why it was so called, and he replied, because he only charged a shilling. O'Brien, who had joined us after breakfasting on board, said, that this answer reminded him of one given to him by a man who attended the hackney-coach stands in London. 'Pray,' said he, 'why are you called Waterman?' 'Waterman,' replied the man, 'vy, sir, 'cause we opens the hackney-coach doors.' At last, with plenty of whipping, and plenty of swearing, and a great deal of laughing, the old horse, whose back curved upwards like a bow, from the difficulty of dragging so many, arrived at the bottom of Portsdown Hill, where we got out, and walked up to the fair. It really was a most beautiful sight. The bright blue sky, and the coloured flags flapping about in all directions, the grass so green, and the white tents and booths, the sun shining so bright, and the shining gilt gingerbread, the variety of toys and the variety of noise, the quantity of people and the quantity of sweetmeats ; little boys so happy, and shop-people so polite, the music at the booths, and the bustle and eagerness of the people outside, made my heart quite jump. There was Richardson, with a clown and harlequin, and such beautiful women, dressed in clothes all over gold spangles, dancing reels and waltzes, and looking so happy ! There was Flint and Gyngell, with fellows tumbling over head and heels, playing such tricks—eating fire, and

drawing yards of tape out of their mouths. Then there was the Royal Circus, all the horses standing in a line, with men and women standing on their backs, waving flags, while the trumpeters blew their trumpets. And the largest giant in the world, and Mr. Paap, the smallest dwarf in the world, and a female dwarf, who was smaller still, and Miss Biffin, who did everything without legs or arms. There was also the learned pig, and the Herefordshire ox, and a hundred other sights which I cannot now remember. We walked about for an hour or two seeing the outside of everything : we determined to go and see the inside. First we went into Richardson's, where we saw a bloody tragedy, with a ghost and thunder, and afterwards a pantomime, full of tricks, and tumbling over one another. Then we saw one or two other things, I forget what, but this I know, that, generally speaking, the outside was better than the inside. After this, feeling very hungry, we agreed to go into a booth and have something to eat. The tables were ranged all round, and, in the centre, there was a boarded platform for dancing. The ladies were there all ready dressed for partners ; and the music was so lively, that I felt very much inclined to dance, but we had agreed to go and see the wild beasts fed at Mr. Polito's menagerie, and as it was now almost eight o'clock, we paid our bill and set off. It was a very curious sight, and better worth seeing than any thing in the fair ; I never had an idea that there were so many strange animals in existence. They were all

secured in iron cages, and a large chandelier with twenty lights, hung in the centre of the booth, and lighted them up, while the keeper went round and stirred them up with his long pole ; at the same time he gave us their histories, which were very interesting. I recollect a few of them. There was the tapir, a great pig with a long nose, a variety of the hiptos-tamass, which the keeper said was an amphibilious animal, as couldn't live on land, and *dies* in the water—however, it seemed to live very well in a cage. Then there was the kangaroo with its young ones peeping out of it—a most astonishing animal. The keeper said that it brought forth two young ones at a birth, and then took them into its stomach again, until they arrived at years of discretion. Then there was the pelican of the wilderness, (I shall not forget him,) with a large bag under his throat, which the man put on his head as a night-cap ; this bird feeds its young with its own blood—when fish are scarce. And there was the laughing hyæna, who cries in the wood like a human being in distress, and devours those who come to his assistance—a sad instance of the depravity of human nature, as the keeper observed. There was a beautiful creature, the royal Bengal tiger, only three years old, what grewed ten inches every year, and never arrived at its full growth. The one we saw, measured, as the keeper told us, sixteen feet from the snout to the tail, and seventeen from the tail to the snout : but there must have been some mistake there. There was a young elephant and three lions,

and several other animals which I forget now, so I shall go on to describe the tragical scene which occurred. The keeper had poked up all the animals, and had commenced feeding them. The great lion was growling and snarling over the shin-bone of an ox, cracking it like a nut, when, by some mismanagement, one end of the pole upon which the chandelier was suspended fell down, striking the door of the cage in which the lioness was at supper, and bursting it open. It was all done in a second ; the chandelier fell, the cage opened, and the lioness sprang out. I remember to this moment seeing the body of the lioness in the air, and then all was dark as pitch. What a change ! not a moment before all of us staring with delight and curiosity, and then to be left in darkness, horror, and dismay ! There was such screaming and shrieking, such crying and fighting, and pushing, and fainting—nobody knew where to go, or how to find their way out. The people crowded first on one side, and then on the other, as their fears instigated them. I was very soon jammed up with my back against the bars of one of the cages, and feeling some beast lay hold of me behind, made a desperate effort, and succeeded in climbing up to the cage above, not, however, without losing the seat of my trowsers, which the laughing hyæna would not let go. I hardly knew where I was when I climbed up ; but I knew the birds were mostly stationed above. However, that I might not have the front of my trowsers torn as well as the behind, as soon as I gained my footing

I turned round, with my back to the bars of the cage, but I had not been there a minute, before I was^s attacked by something which digged into me like a pickaxe, and as the hyæna had torn my clothes, I had no defence against it. To turn round would have been worse still ; so, after having received above a dozen stabs, I contrived by degrees to shift my position until I was opposite to another cage, but not until the pelican, for it was that brute, had drawn as much blood from me as would have fed his young for a week. I was surmising what danger I should next encounter, when to my joy I discovered that I had gained the open door from which the lioness had escaped. I crawled in, and pulled the door to after me, thinking myself very fortunate ; and there I sat very quietly in a corner during the remainder of the noise and confusion. I had been there but a few minutes, when the beef-eaters, as they were called, who played the music outside, came in with torches and loaded muskets. The sight which presented itself was truly shocking ; twenty or thirty men, women, and children lay on the ground, and I thought at first the lioness had killed them all, but they were only in fits, or had been trampled down by the crowd. No one was seriously hurt. As for the lioness, she was not to be found : and, as soon as it was ascertained that she had escaped, there was as much terror and scampering away outside, as there had been in the menagerie. It appeared afterwards, that the animal had been as much frightened as we had been, and



Peter a Lion at Portsdown Fair

had secreted herself under one of the waggons. It was some time before she could be found. At last O'Brien, who was a very brave fellow, went a-head of the beef-eaters, and saw her eyes glaring. They borrowed a net or two from the carts which had brought calves to the fair, and threw them over her. When she was fairly entangled, they dragged her by the tail into the menagerie. All this while I had remained very quietly in the den, but when I perceived that its lawful owner had come back to retake possession, I thought it was time to come out ; so I called to my messmates, who, with O'Brien, were assisting the beef-eaters. They had not discovered me, and laughed very much when they saw where I was. One of the midshipmen shot the bolt of the door, so that I could not jump out, and then stirred me up with a long pole. At last I contrived to unbolt it again, and got out, when they laughed still more, at the seat of my trowsers being torn off. It was not exactly a laughing matter to me, although I had to congratulate myself upon a very lucky escape ; and so did my messmates think, when I narrated my adventures. The pelican was the worst part of the business. O'Brien lent me a dark silk handkerchief, which I tied round my waist, and let drop behind, so that my misfortunes might not attract any notice, and then we quitted the menagerie ; but I was so stiff that I could scarcely walk.

We then went to what they called the Ranelagh Gardens to see the fireworks, which were to be let off at ten o'clock. It was exactly ten

when we paid for our admission, and we waited very patiently for a quarter of an hour, but there were no signs of the fireworks being displayed. The fact was, that the man to whom the gardens belonged, waited until more company should arrive, although the place was already very full of people. Now the first lieutenant had ordered the boat to wait for us until twelve o'clock, and then return on board ; and as we were seven miles from Portsmouth, we had not much time to spare. We waited another quarter of an hour, and then it was agreed that as the fireworks were stated in the handbill to commence precisely at ten o'clock, we were fully justified in letting them off ourselves. O'Brien went out, and returned with a dozen penny rattans, which he notched in the end. The fireworks were on the posts and stages, all ready, and it was agreed that we should light them all at once, and then mix with the crowd. The oldsters lighted cigars, and fixing them in the notched end of the canes, continued to puff them until they were all well lighted. They handed one to each of us, and at a signal we all applied them to the match papers, and as soon as the fire communicated, we threw down our canes and ran in among the crowd. In about half a minute, off they all went in the most beautiful confusion ; there were silver stars and golden stars, blue lights and Catherine-wheels, mines and bombs, Grecian-fires and Roman-candles, Chinese trees, rockets, and illuminated mottoes, all firing away, cracking, popping, and fizzing, at

the same time. It was unanimously agreed that it was a great improvement upon the intended show. The man to whom the gardens belonged ran out of a booth where he had been drinking beer at his ease, while his company were waiting, swearing vengeance against the perpetrators ; indeed, the next day he offered fifty pounds reward for the discovery of the offenders. But I think that he was treated very properly. He was, in his situation, a servant of the public, and he had behaved as if he was their master. We all escaped very cleverly, and taking another dilly, arrived at Portsmouth, and were down to the boat in good time. The next day I was so stiff, and in such pain, that I was obliged to go to the doctor, who put me on the list, where I remained a week before I could return to my duty. So much for Ports-down fair.

It was on a Saturday that I returned to my duty, and Sunday being a fine day, we all went on shore to church with Mr. Falcon, the first lieutenant. We liked going to church very much ; not, I am sorry to say, from religious feelings, but for the following reason ;—the first lieutenant sat in a pew below, and we were placed in the gallery above, where he could not see us, nor indeed could we see him. We all remained very quiet, and I may say very devout, during the time of the service, but the clergyman who delivered the sermon was so tedious, and had such a bad voice, that we generally slipped out as soon as he went up into the pulpit, and adjourned to a pastry-cook's

opposite, to eat cakes and tarts and drink cherry-brandy, which we infinitely preferred to hearing a sermon. Somehow or other, the first lieutenant had scent of our proceedings : we believed that the marine officer informed against us, and this Sunday he served us a pretty trick. We had been at the pastry-cook's as usual, and as soon as we perceived the people coming out of church, we put all our tarts and sweetmeats into our hats, which we then slipped on our heads, and took our station at the church-door, as if we had just come down from the gallery, and had been waiting for him. Instead, however, of appearing at the church-door, he walked up the street, and desired us to follow him to the boat. The fact was, he had been in the back-room at the pastry-cook's watching our motions through the green blinds. We had no suspicion, but thought that he had come out of church a little sooner than usual. When we arrived on board and followed him up the side, he said to us as we came on deck, — 'Walk aft, young gentlemen.' We did ; and he desired us to 'toe a line,' which means to stand in a row. 'Now, Mr. Dixon,' said he, 'what was the text to-day ?' As he very often asked us that question, we always left one in the church until the text was given out, who brought it to us in the pastry-cook's shop, when we all marked it in our bibles to be ready if he asked us. Dixon immediately pulled out his bible where he had marked down the leaf, and read it. 'O ! that was it,' said Mr. Falcon ; 'you must have remarkably good

ears, Mr. Dixon, to have heard the clergyman from the pastry-cook's shop. Now, gentlemen, hats off, if you please.' We all slid off our hats, which, as he expected, were full of pastry. 'Really, gentlemen,' said he, feeling the different papers of pastry and sweetmeats, 'I am quite delighted to perceive that you have not been to church for nothing. Few come away with so many good things pressed upon their seat of memory. Master-at-arms, send all the ship's boys aft.'

The boys all came tumbling up the ladders, and the first lieutenant desired each of them to take a seat upon the carronade slides. When they were all stationed, he ordered us to go round with our hats and request of each his acceptance of a tart, which we were obliged to do, handing first to one and then to another, until the hats were all empty. What annoyed me more than all, was the grinning of the boys at their being served by us like footmen, as well as the ridicule and laughter of the whole ship's company, who had assembled at the gangways.

When all the pastry was devoured, the first lieutenant said, 'There, gentlemen, now that you have had your lesson for the day, you may go below.' We could not help laughing ourselves when we went down into the berth; Mr. Falcon always punished us so good-humouredly, and, in some way or other, his punishments were severally connected with the description of the offence. He always had a remedy for everything that he disapproved of, and the ship's company used to call him 'Remedy Jack.' I

ought to observe, that some of my messmates were very severe upon the ship's boys after that circumstance, always giving them a kick or a cuff on the head whenever they could, telling them at the same time, 'There's another tart for you, you whelp.' I believe, if the boys had known what was in reserve for them, they would much rather have left the pastry alone.

CHAPTER X

A pressgang beaten off by one woman—Dangers at *Spit-head* and *Point*—A treat for both parties, of *pulled chicken*, at my expense—Also gin for twenty—I am made a prisoner : escape and rejoin my ship.

I MUST now relate what occurred to me a few days before the ship sailed, which will prove that it is not necessary to encounter the winds and waves, or the cannon of the enemy, to be in danger, when you have entered his majesty's service : on the contrary, I have been in action since, and I declare, without hesitation, that I did not feel so much alarm on that occasion, as I did on the one of which I am about to give the history. We were reported ready for sea, and the Admiralty was anxious that we should proceed. The only obstacle to our sailing was that we had not yet completed our complement of men. The captain applied to the port-admiral, and obtained permission to send parties on shore to impress seamen. The second and third lieutenants, and the oldest midshipmen, were despatched on shore every night, with some of the most trustworthy men, and generally brought on board in the morning about half-a-dozen men, whom they had picked up in the different ale-houses or grog-shops, as the sailors call them. Some of them were retained, but most of them sent on shore as un-

serviceable ; for it is the custom, when a man either enters, or is impressed, to send him down to the surgeon in the cock-pit, where he is stripped and examined all over, to see if he be sound and fit for his majesty's service ; and if not, he is sent on shore again. Impressing appeared to be rather serious work, as far as I could judge from the accounts which I heard, and from the way in which our sailors, who were employed on the service, were occasionally beaten and wounded ; the seamen who were impressed appearing to fight as hard not to be forced into the service as they did for the honour of the country, after they were fairly embarked in it. I had a great wish to be one of the party before the ship sailed, and asked O'Brien, who was very kind to me in general, and allowed nobody to thrash me but himself, if he would take me with him, which he did on the night after I had made the request. I put on my dirk, that they might know I was an officer, as well as for my protection. About dusk we rowed on shore, and landed on the Gosport side : the men were all armed with cutlasses, and wore pea jackets, which are very short great coats made of what they call Flushing. We did not stop to look at any of the grog-shops in the town, as it was too early, but walked out about three miles in the suburbs, and went to a house, the door of which was locked, but we forced it open in a minute, and hastened to enter the passage, where we found the landlady standing to defend the entrance. The passage was long and narrow, and she was

a very tall corpulent woman, so that her body nearly filled it up, and in her hands she held a long spit pointed at us, with which she kept us at bay. The officers, who were the foremost, did not like to attack a woman, and she made such drives at them with her spit, that had they not retreated, some of them would soon have been ready for roasting. The sailors laughed and stood outside, leaving the officers to settle the business how they could. At last, the landlady called out to her husband, 'Be they all out, Jem?' 'Yes,' replied the husband, 'they be all safe gone.' 'Well, then,' replied she, 'I'll soon have all these gone too'; and with these words she made such a rush forward upon us with her spit, that had we not fallen back, and tumbled one over another, she certainly would have run it through the second lieutenant, who commanded the party. The passage was cleared in an instant, and as soon as we were all in the street she bolted us out; so there we were, three officers and fifteen armed men, fairly beat off by a fat old woman; the sailors who had been drinking in the house having made their escape to some other place. But I do not well see how it could be otherwise; either we must have killed or wounded the woman, or she would have run us through, she was so resolute. Had her husband been in the passage, he would have been settled in a very short time; but what can you do with a woman who fights like a devil, and yet claims all the rights and immunities of the softer sex? We all walked away, looking very foolish, and

O'Brien observed that the next time he called at that house he would weather the old cat, for he would take her ladyship in the rear.

We then called at other houses, where we picked up one or two men, but most of them escaped by getting out at the windows or the back doors, as we entered the front. Now there was a grog-shop which was a very favourite rendezvous of the seamen belonging to the merchant vessels, and to which they were accustomed to retreat when they heard that the pressgangs were out. Our officers were aware of this, and were therefore indifferent as to the escape of the men, as they knew that they would all go to that place, and confide in their numbers for beating us off. As it was then one o'clock, they thought it time to go there ; we proceeded without any noise, but they had people on the look-out, and as soon as we turned the corner of the lane the alarm was given. I was afraid that they would all run away, and we should lose them ; but, on the contrary, they mustered very strong on that night, and had resolved to 'give fight.' The men remained in the house, but an advanced guard of about thirty of their wives saluted us with a shower of stones and mud. Some of our sailors were hurt, but they did not appear to mind what the women did. They rushed on, and then they were attacked by the women with their fists and nails. Notwithstanding this, the sailors only laughed, pushing the women on one side, and saying, 'Be quiet, Poll' ;— 'Don't be foolish, Molly' ;— 'Out of the way,



"Clap on Here, Peg, and Let's have this Little Midsbipmite!"

Sukey : we a'n't come to take away your fancy man ' ; with expressions of that sort, although the blood trickled down many of their faces, from the way in which they had been clawed. Thus we attempted to force our way through them, but I had a very narrow escape even in this instance. A woman seized me by the arm, and pulled me towards her ; had it not been for one of the quarter-masters I should have been separated from my party ; but, just as they dragged me away, he caught hold of me by the leg, and stopped them. ' Clap on here, Peg,' cried the woman to another, ' and let's have this little midshipmite ; I wants a baby to dry-nurse.' Two more women came to her assistance, catching hold of my other arm, and they would have dragged me out of the grasp of the quarter-master, had he not called out for more help on his side, upon which two of the seamen laid hold of my other leg, and there was such a tussle, (all at my expense,) such pulling and hauling : sometimes the women gained an inch or two of me, then the sailors got it back again. At one moment I thought it was all over with me, and in the next I was with my own men. ' Pull devil ; pull baker ! ' cried the women, and then they laughed, although I did not, I can assure you, for I really think that I was pulled out an inch taller, and my knees and shoulders pained me very much indeed. At last the women laughed so much that they could not hold on, so I was dragged into the middle of our own sailors, where I took care to remain ; and, after a little more squeez-

ing and fighting, was carried by the crowd into the house. The seamen of the merchant ships had armed themselves with bludgeons and other weapons, and had taken a position on the tables. They were more than two to one against us, and there was a dreadful fight, as their resistance was very desperate. Our sailors were obliged to use their cutlasses, and for a few minutes I was quite bewildered with the shouting and swearing, pushing and scuffling, collaring and fighting, together with the dust raised up, which not only blinded, but nearly choked me. By the time that my breath was nearly squeezed out of my body, our sailors got the best of it, which the landlady and women of the house perceiving, they put out all the lights, so that I could not tell where I was ; but our sailors had every one seized his man, and contrived to haul him out of the street door, where they were collected together, and secured.

Now again I was in great difficulty ; I had been knocked down and trod upon, and when I did contrive to get up again, I did not know the direction in which the door lay. I felt about by the wall, and at last came to a door, for the room was at that time nearly empty, the women having followed the men out of the house. I opened it, and found that it was not the right one, but led into a little side parlour, where there was a fire, but no lights. I had just discovered my mistake, and was about to retreat, when I was shoved in from behind, and the key turned upon me ; there I was, all alone ;

and, I must acknowledge, very much frightened, as I thought that the vengeance of the women would be wreaked upon me. I considered that my death was certain, and that, like the man Orpheus I had read of in my books, I should be torn to pieces by these Bacchanals. However, I reflected that I was an officer in his majesty's service, and that it was my duty, if necessary, to sacrifice my life for my king and country. I thought of my poor mother ; but as it made me unhappy, I tried to forget her, and call to my memory all I had read of the fortitude and courage of various brave men, when death stared them in the face. I peeped through the keyhole, and perceived that the candles were re-lighted, and that there were only women in the room, who were talking all at once, and not thinking about me. But in a minute or two, a woman came in from the street, with her long black hair hanging about her shoulders, and her cap in her hand. 'Well,' cried she, 'they've nabbed my husband ; but I'll be dishd if I hav'n't boxed up the midshipmite in that parlour, and he shall take his place.' I thought I should have died when I looked at the woman, and perceived her coming up to the door, followed by some others, to unlock it. As the door opened, I drew my dirk, resolving to die like an officer, and as they advanced, I retreated to a corner, brandishing my dirk, without saying a word. 'Vell,' cried the woman who had made me a prisoner, 'I do declare I likes to see a puddle in a storm—only look at the little biscuit-

nibbler showing fight ! Come, my lovey, you belongs to me.'

'Never !' exclaimed I with indignation. 'Keep off, or I shall do you mischief' ; (and I raised my dirk in advance ;) 'I am an officer and a gentleman.'

'Sall,' cried the odious woman, 'fetch a mop and a pail of dirty water, and I'll trundle that dirk out of his fist.'

'No, no,' replied another rather good-looking young woman, 'leave him to me—don't hurt him—he really is a very nice little man. What's your name, my dear ?'

'Peter Simple is my name,' replied I ; 'and I am a king's officer, so be careful what you are about.'

'Don't be afraid, Peter, nobody shall hurt you ; but you must not draw your dirk before ladies, that's not like an officer and a gentleman—so put up your dirk, that's a good boy.'

'I will not,' replied I, 'unless you promise me that I shall go away unmolested.'

'I do promise you that you shall, upon my word, Peter—upon my honour—will that content you ?'

'Yes,' replied I, 'if every one else will promise the same.'

'Upon our honours,' they all cried together ; upon which I was satisfied, and putting my dirk into its sheath, was about to quit the room.

'Stop, Peter,' said the young woman who had taken my part ; 'I must have a kiss before you go.' 'And so must I ; and so must we all,' cried the women.

I was very much shocked, and attempted to draw my dirk again, but they had closed in with me, and prevented me. ‘Recollect your honour,’ cried I to the young woman, as I struggled.

‘My honour!—Lord bless you, Peter, the less we say about that, the better.’

‘But you promised that I should go away quietly,’ said I, appealing to them.

‘Well, and so you shall ; but recollect, Peter, that you are an officer and a gentleman—you surely would not be so shabby as to go away without treating us. What money have you got in your pocket?’ and, without giving me time to answer, she felt in my pocket, and pulled out my purse, which she opened. ‘Why, Peter, you are as rich as a Jew,’ said she, as they counted thirty shillings on the table. ‘Now what shall we have?’

‘Anything you please,’ said I, ‘provided that you will let me go.’

‘Well, then, it shall be a gallon of gin. Sall, call Mrs. Flanagan. Mrs. Flanagan, we want a gallon of gin, and clean glasses.’

Mrs. Flanagan received the major part of my money, and in a minute returned with the gin and wine glasses.

‘Now, Peter, my cove, let’s all draw round the table, and make ourselves cosy.’

‘O no,’ replied I, ‘take my money, drink the gin, but pray let me go’ ; but they wouldn’t listen to me. Then I was obliged to sit down with them, the gin was poured out, and they made me drink a glass, which nearly choked

me. It had, however, one good effect, it gave me courage, and in a minute or two I felt as if I could fight them all. The door of the room was on the same side as the fire-place, and I perceived that the poker was between the bars, and red hot. I complained that I was cold, although I was in a burning fever : and they allowed me to get up to warm my hands. As soon as I reached the fire-place, I snatched out the red-hot poker, and, brandishing it over my head, made for the door. They all jumped up to detain me, but I made a poke at the foremost, which made her run back with a shriek. (I do believe that I burnt her nose.) I seized my opportunity, and escaped into the street, whirling the poker round my head ; while all the women followed, hooting and shouting after me. I never stopped running and whirling my poker until I was reeking with perspiration, and the poker was quite cold. Then I looked back, and found that I was alone. It was very dark ; every house was shut up, and not a light to be seen anywhere. I stopped at the corner, not knowing where I was or what I was to do. I felt very miserable indeed, and was reflecting on my wisest plan, when who should turn the corner, but one of the quarter-masters, who had been left on shore by accident. I knew him by his pea jacket and straw hat to be one of our men, and I was delighted to see him. I told him what had happened, and he replied that he was going to a house where the people knew him and would let him in. When we arrived there, the people of the house were very civil ;

the landlady made us some purl, which the quarter-master ordered, and which I thought very good indeed. After we had finished the jug, we both fell asleep in our chairs. I did not awaken until I was roused by the quarter-master, at past seven o'clock, when we took a wherry, and went off to the ship.

CHAPTER XI

O'Brien takes me under his protection—The ship's company are paid, so are the bumboat women, the Jews, and the emancipationist after a fashion—We go to sea—*Doctor* O'Brien's cure for sea-sickness—One pill of the Doctor's more than a dose.

WHEN we arrived, I reported myself to the first lieutenant, and told him the whole story of the manner in which I had been treated, showing him the poker, which I brought on board with me. He heard me very patiently, and then said, 'Well, Mr. Simple, you may be the greatest fool of your family for all I know to the contrary, but never pretend to be a fool with me. That poker proves the contrary ; and if your wit can serve you upon your own emergency, I expect that it will be employed for the benefit of the service.' He then sent for O'Brien, and gave him a lecture for allowing me to go with the pressgang, pointing out, what was very true, that I could have been of no service, and might have met with a serious accident. I went down on the main-deck, and O'Brien came to me. 'Peter,' said he, 'I have been jawed for letting you go, so it is but fair that you should be thrashed for having asked me.' I wished to argue the point, but he cut all argument short, by kicking me down the hatchway ; and thus ended my zealous attempt to procure seamen for his majesty's service.

At last the frigate was full manned ; and, as we had received drafts of men from other ships, we were ordered to be paid previously to our going to sea. The people on shore always find out when a ship is to be paid, and very early in the morning we were surrounded with wherries, laden with Jews and other people, some requesting admittance to sell their goods, others to get paid for what they had allowed the sailors to take up upon credit. But the first lieutenant would not allow any of them to come on board until after the ship was paid ; although they were so urgent, that he was forced to place sentries in the chains with cold shot, to stave the boats if they came alongside. I was standing at the gangway, looking at the crowd of boats, when a black-looking fellow in one of the wherries said to me, ‘ I say, sir, let me slip in at the port, and I have a very nice present to make you ’ ; and he displayed a gold seal, which he held up to me. I immediately ordered the sentry to keep him farther off, for I was very much affronted at his supposing me capable of being bribed to disobey my orders. About eleven o’clock the dock-yard boat, with all the pay clerks, and the cashier, with his chest of money, came on board, and was shown into the fore-cabin, where the captain attended the pay-table. The men were called in, one by one, and as the amount of wages due had been previously calculated, they were paid very fast. The money was always received in their hats, after it had been counted out in the presence of the officers and captain. Outside the

cabin door, there stood a tall man in black, with hair straight combed, who had obtained an order from the port-admiral to be permitted to come on board. He attacked every sailor as he came out, with his money in his hat, for a subscription to emancipate the slaves in the West Indies ; but the sailors would not give him anything, swearing that the niggers were better off than they were ; for they did not work harder by day, and had no watch and watch to keep during the night. ‘ Sarvitude is sarvitude all over the world, my old psalm-singer,’ replied one. ‘ They sarve their masters, as in duty bound ; we sarve the king, ’cause he can’t do without us—and he never axes our leave, but helps himself.’

‘ Yes,’ replied the straight-haired gentleman ; ‘ but slavery is a very different thing.’

‘ Can’t say that I see any difference ; do you, Bill ? ’

‘ Not I : and I suppose as if they didn’t like it, they’d run away.’

‘ Run away ! poor creatures,’ said the black gentleman. ‘ Why if they did, they would be flogged.’

‘ Flogged—heh ; well, and if we run away, we are to be hanged. The nigger’s better off nor we ; ar’n’t he, Tom ? ’ Then the purser’s steward came out ; he was what they call a bit of a lawyer, that is, had received more education than the seamen in general.

‘ I trust, sir,’ said the man in black, ‘ that you will contribute something.’

‘Not I, my hearty ; I owe every farthing of my money, and more too, I’m afraid.’

‘Still, sir, a small trifle.’

‘Why, what an infernal rascal you must be, to ask a man to give away what is not his own property ! Did I not tell you that I owed it all ? There’s an old proverb—be just before you’re generous. Now, it’s my opinion, that you are a methodistical, good-for-nothing blackguard ; and if any one is such a fool as to give you money, you will keep it for yourself.’

When the man found that he could obtain nothing at the door, he went down on the lower deck, in which he did not act very wisely ; for now that the men were paid, the boats were permitted to come alongside, and so much spirits were smuggled in, that most of the seamen were more or less intoxicated. As soon as he went below, he commenced distributing prints of a black man kneeling in chains and saying, ‘Am not I your brother ?’ Some of the men laughed, and swore that they would paste their brother up in the mess to say prayers for the ship’s company ; but others were very angry, and abused him. At last, one man, who was tipsy, came up to him. ‘Do you pretend for to insinuate that this crying black thief is my brother ?’

‘To be sure I do,’ replied the methodist.

‘Then take that for your infernal lie,’ said the sailor, hitting him in the face right and left, and knocking the man down into the cable tier, from whence he climbed up, and made his escape out of the frigate as soon as he was able.

The ship was now in a state of confusion and uproar ; there were Jews trying to sell clothes, or to obtain money for clothes which they had sold ; bumboat men and bumboat women showing their long bills, and demanding or coaxing for payment ; other people from the shore, with hundreds of small debts ; and the sailors' wives, sticking close to them, and disputing every bill presented, as an extortion or a robbery. There were such bawling and threatening, laughing and crying—for the women were all to quit the ship before sunset—at one moment a Jew was upset, and all his hamper of clothes tossed into the hold ; at another, a sailor was seen hunting everywhere for a Jew who had cheated him,—all squabbling or skylarking, and many of them very drunk. It appeared to me that the sailors had rather a difficult point to settle. They had three claimants upon them, the Jew for clothes, the bumboat men for their mess in harbour, and their wives for their support during their absence ; and the money which they received was, generally speaking, not more than sufficient to meet one of the demands. As it may be supposed, the women had the best of it ; the others were paid a trifle, and promised the remainder when they came back from their cruize ; and although, as the case stood then, it might appear that two of the parties were ill used, yet in the long run they were more than indemnified, for their charges were so extravagant, that if one-third of their bills were paid, there would still remain a profit. About five

o'clock, the orders were given for the ship to be cleared. All disputed points were settled by the sergeant of marines with a party, who divided their antagonists from the Jews ; and every description of persons not belonging to the ship, whether male or female, was dismissed over the side. The hammocks were piped down, those who were intoxicated were put to bed, and the ship was once more quiet. Nobody was punished for having been tipsy, as pay-day is considered, on board a man-of-war, as the winding up of all incorrect behaviour, and from that day the sailors turn over a new leaf : for, although some latitude is permitted, and the seamen are seldom flogged in harbour, yet the moment that the anchor is at the bows, strict discipline is exacted, and intoxication must no longer hope to be forgiven.

The next day everything was prepared for sea, and no leave was permitted to the officers. Stock of every kind was brought on board, and the large boats hoisted and secured. On the morning after, at daylight, a signal from the flag-ship in harbour was made for us to un-moor ; our orders had come down to cruize in the Bay of Biscay. The captain came on board, the anchor weighed, and we ran through the Needles with a fine N.E. breeze. I admired the scenery of the Isle of Wight, looked with admiration at Alum Bay, was astonished at the Needle rocks, and then felt so very ill that I went down below. What occurred for the next six days I cannot tell. I thought that I should die every moment, and lay in my hammock or

on the chests for the whole of that time, incapable of eating, drinking, or walking about. O'Brien came to me on the seventh morning, and said, that if I did not exert myself I never should get well, that he was very fond of me, and had taken me under his protection, and, to prove his regard, he would do for me what he would not take the trouble to do for any other youngster in the ship, which was, to give me a good basting, which was a sovereign remedy for sea-sickness. He suited the action to the word, and drubbed me on the ribs without mercy, until I thought the breath was out of my body, and then he took out a rope's end and thrashed me until I obeyed his orders to go on deck immediately. Before he came to me, I could never have believed it possible that I could have obeyed him, but somehow or another I did contrive to crawl up the ladder to the main-deck, where I sat down on the shot-racks and cried bitterly. What would I have given to have been at home again ! It was not my fault that I was the greatest fool in the family, yet how was I punished for it ! If this was kindness from O'Brien, what had I to expect from those who were not partial to me ? But, by degrees, I recovered myself, and certainly felt a great deal better, and that night I slept very soundly. The next morning O'Brien came to me again. 'It's a nasty slow fever, that sea-sickness, my Peter, and we must drive it out of you' ; and then he commenced a repetition of yesterday's remedy until I was almost a jelly. Whether the fear of being

thrashed drove away my sea-sickness, or whatever might be the real cause of it, I do not know, but this is certain, that I felt no more of it after the second beating, and the next morning when I awoke I was very hungry. I hastened to dress myself before O'Brien came to me, and did not see him until we met at breakfast.

'Pater,' said he, 'let me feel your pulse.'

'O no !' replied I, 'indeed I'm quite well.'

'Quite well ! Can you eat biscuit and salt butter ?'

'Yes, I can.'

'And a piece of fat pork ?'

'Yes, that I can.'

'It's thanks to me then, Pater,' replied he ! 'so you'll have no more of my medicine until you fall sick again.'

'I hope not,' replied I, 'for it was not very pleasant.'

'Pleasant ! you simple Simple, when did you ever hear of physic being pleasant, unless a man prescribe for himself ? I suppose you'd be after lollipops for the yellow fever. Live and larn, boy, and thank Heaven that you've found somebody who loves you well enough to baste you when it's good for your health.'

I replied, 'that I certainly hoped, that much as I felt obliged to him, I should not require any more proofs of his regard.'

'Any more such *striking* proofs, you mean, Pater ; but let me tell you that they were sincere proofs, for since you've been ill I've been eating your pork and drinking your grog, which latter can't be too plentiful in the Bay of Biscay.'

And now that I've cured you, you'll be tucking all that into your own little breadbasket, so that I'm no gainer, and I think that you may be convinced that you never had or will have two more disinterested thumpings in all your born days. However, you're very welcome, so say no more about it.'

I held my tongue and ate a very hearty breakfast. From that day I returned to my duty, and was put into the same watch with O'Brien, who spoke to the first lieutenant, and told him that he had taken me under his charge.

CHAPTER XII

New theory of Mr. Muddle remarkable for having no end to it—Novel practice of Mr. Chucks—O'Brien commences his history—There were giants in those days—I bring up the master's *night-glass*.

As I have already mentioned sufficient of the captain and the first lieutenant to enable the reader to gain an insight into their characters, I shall now mention two very odd personages who were my shipmates, the carpenter and the boatswain. The carpenter, whose name was Muddle, used to go by the appellation of Philosopher Chips ; not that he followed any particular school, but had formed a theory of his own, from which he was not to be dissuaded. This was, that the universe had its cycle of events which turned round, so that in a certain period of time everything was to happen over again. I never could make him explain upon what data his calculations were founded ; he said, that if he explained it, I was too young to comprehend it ; but the fact was this, ' that in 27,672 years everything that was going on now would be going on again, with the same people as were existing at this present time.' He very seldom ventured to make the remark to Captain Savage, but to the first lieutenant he did very often. ' I've been as close to it as possible, sir, I do assure you, although you find fault ; but 27,672 years ago you were first

lieutenant of this ship, and I was carpenter, although we recollect nothing about it ; and 27,672 years hence we shall both be standing by this boat, talking about the repairs, as we are now.'

'I do not doubt it, Mr. Muddle,' replied the first lieutenant ; 'I dare say that it is all very true ; but the repairs must be finished this night, and 27,672 years hence you will have the order just as positive as you have it now, so let it be done.'

This theory made him very indifferent as to danger, or indeed as to anything. It was of no consequence, the affair took its station in the course of time. It had happened at the above period, and would happen again. Fate was fate.

But the boatswain was a more amusing personage. He was considered to be the *taughtest* (that is, the most active and severe) boatswain in the service. He went by the name of 'Gentleman Chucks,'—the latter was his surname. He appeared to have received half an education ; sometimes his language was for a few sentences remarkably well chosen, but, all of a sudden, he would break down at a hard word ; but I shall be able to let the reader into more of his history as I go on with my adventures. He had a very handsome person, inclined to be stout, keen eyes, and hair curling in ringlets. He held his head up, and strutted as he walked. He declared 'that an officer should look like an officer, and *comport* himself accordingly.' In his person he was very clean,

wore rings on his great fingers, and a large frill to his bosom, which stuck out like the back fin of a perch, and the collar of his shirt was always pulled up to a level with his cheek-bones. He never appeared on deck without his ‘persuader,’ which was three rattans twisted into one, like a cable ; sometimes he called it his Order of the Bath, or his *Trio juncto in uno* ; and this persuader was seldom idle. He attempted to be very polite, even when addressing the common seamen, and, certainly, he always commenced his observations to them in a very gracious manner, but, as he continued, he became less choice in his phraseology. O’Brien said that his speeches were like the Sin of the poet, very fair at the upper part of them, but shocking at the lower extremities. As a specimen of them, he would say to the man on the forecastle, ‘ Allow me to observe, my dear man, in the most delicate way in the world, that you are spilling that tar upon the deck—a deck, sir, if I may venture to make the observation, I had the duty of seeing holystoned this morning. You understand me, sir, you have defiled his majesty’s forecastle. I must do my duty, sir, if you neglect yours ; so take that—and that—and that—(thrashing the man with his rattan)—you d—d haymaking son of a sea-cook. Do it again, d—n your eyes, and I’ll cut your liver out.’

I remember one of the ship’s boys going forward with a kid of dirty water to empty in the head, without putting his hand up to his hat, as he passed the boatswain. ‘ Stop, my little

friend,' said the boatswain, pulling out his frill, and raising up both sides of his shirt collar. 'Are you aware, sir, of my rank and station in society?'

'Yes, sir,' replied the boy, trembling, and eyeing the rattan.

'Oh, you are!' replied Mr. Chucks. 'Had you not been aware of it, I should have considered a gentle correction necessary, that you might have avoided such an error in future; but, as you *were* aware of it, why then, d—n you, you have no excuse, so take that—and that—you yelping, half-starved abortion. I really beg your pardon, Mr. Simple,' said he to me, as the boy went howling forward, for I was walking with him at the time; 'but really the service makes brutes of us all. It is hard to sacrifice our health, our night's rest, and our comforts; but still more so, that in my responsible situation, I am obliged too often to sacrifice my gentility.'

The master was the officer who had charge of the watch to which I was stationed; he was a very rough sailor, who had been brought up in the merchant service, not much of a gentleman in his appearance, very good-tempered, and very fond of grog. He always quarrelled with the boatswain, and declared that the service was going to the devil, now that warrant officers put on white shirts, and wore frills to them. But the boatswain did not care for him; he knew his duty, he did his duty, and if the captain was satisfied, he said that the whole ship's company might grumble. As for the

master, he said, the man was very well, but having been brought up in a collier, he could not be expected to be very refined ; ‘ in fact,’ he observed, pulling up his shirt collar,—‘ it was impossible to make a silk purse out of a sow’s ear.’ The master was very kind to me, and used to send me down to my hammock before my watch was half over. Until that time, I walked the deck with O’Brien, who was a very pleasant companion, and taught me everything that he could, connected with my profession. One night, when we had the middle-watch, I told him I should like very much if he would give me the history of his life. ‘ That I will, my honey,’ replied he, ‘ all that I can remember of it, though I have no doubt but that I’ve forgotten the best part of it. It’s now within five minutes of two bells, so we’ll heave the log and mark the board, and then I’ll spin you a yarn, which will keep us both from going to sleep.’ O’Brien reported the rate of sailing to the master, marked it down on the log-board, and then returned.

‘ So now, my boy, I’ll come to an anchor on the topsail halyard rack, and you may squeeze your thread-paper little carcass under my lee, and then I’ll tell you all about it. First and foremost, you must know that I am descended from the great O’Brien Borru, who was a king in his time, as the great Fingal was before him. Of course you’ve heard of Fingal.’

‘ I can’t say that I ever did,’ replied I.

‘ Never heard of Fingal !—murder ! Where must you have been all your life ? Well, then,

to give you some notion of Fingal, I will first tell you how Fingal bothered the great Scotch giant, and then I'll go on with my own story. Fingal, you must know, was a giant himself, and no fool of one, and any one that affronted him was as sure of a bating, as I am to keep the middle-watch to-night. But there was a giant in Scotland as tall as the main-mast, more or less, as we say when we a'n't quite sure, as it saves telling more lies than there's occasion for. Well, this Scotch giant heard of Fingal, and how he had beaten everybody, and he said, "Who is this Fingal? By Jasus," says he, in Scotch, "I'll just walk over and see what he's made of." So he walked across the Irish Channel, and landed within half a mile of Belfast, but whether he was out of his depth or not I can't tell, although I suspect that he was not dry-footed. When Fingal heard that this great chap was coming over, he was in a devil of a fright, for they told him that the Scotchman was taller by a few feet or so. Giants, you know, measure by feet, and don't bother themselves about the inches, as we little devils are obliged to do. So Fingal kept a sharp look-out for the Scotchman, and one fine morning, there he was, sure enough, coming up the hill to Fingal's house. If Fingal was afraid before, he had more reason to be afraid when he saw the fellow, for he looked for all the world like the monument upon a voyage of discovery. So Fingal ran into his house, and called to his wife Shaya, "My vourneen," says he, "be quick now; there's that big bully of a Scotchman

coming up the hill. Kiver me up with the blankets, and if he asks who is in bed, tell him it's the child." So Fingal laid down on the bed, and his wife had just time to cover him up, when in comes the Scotchman, and though he stooped low, he broke his head against the portal. "Where's that baste Fingal?" says he, rubbing his forehead; "show him to me, that I may give him a bating." "Whisht, whisht!" cries Shaya, "you'll wake the babby, and then him that you talk of bating will be the death of you, if he comes in." "Is that the babby?" cried the Scotchman with surprise, looking at the great carcase muffled up in the blankets. "Sure it is," replied Shaya, "and Fingal's babby too; so don't you wake him, or Fingal will twist your neck in a minute." "By the cross of St. Andrew," replied the giant, "then it's time for me to be off; for if that's his babby, I'll be but a mouthful to the fellow himself. Good morning to ye." So the Scotch giant ran out of the house, and never stopped to eat or drink until he got back to his own hills, foreby he was nearly drowned in having mistaken his passage across the Channel in his great hurry. Then Fingal got up and laughed, as well he might, at his own 'cuteness; and so ends my story about Fingal. And now I'll begin about myself. As I said before, I am descended from the great O'Brien, who was a king in his time, but that time's past. I suppose, as the world turns round, my children's children's posterity may be kings again, although there seems but little chance of it just

now ; but there's ups and downs on a grand scale, as well as in a man's own history, and the wheel of fortune keeps turning for the comfort of those who are at the lowest spoke, as I may be just now. To cut the story a little shorter, I skip down to my great-grandfather, who lived like a real gentleman, as he was, upon his ten thousand a-year. At last he died, and eight thousand of the ten was buried with him. My grandfather followed his father all in good course of time, and only left my father about one hundred acres of bog to keep up the dignity of the family. I am the youngest of ten, and devil a copper have I but my pay, or am I likely to have. You may talk about *descent*, but a more *descending* family than mine was never in existence, for here am I with twenty-five pounds a year, and a half-pay of "nothing a-day, and find myself," when my great ancestor did just what he pleased with all Ireland, and everybody in it. But this is all nothing, except to prove satisfactorily that I am not worth a skillagalee, and that is the reason which induces me to condescend to serve his majesty. Father M'Grath, the priest, who lived with my father, taught me the elements, as they call them. I thought I had enough of the elements then, but I've seen a deal more of them since. "Terence," says my father to me one day, "what do you mane to do?" "To get my dinner, sure," replied I, for I was not a little hungry. "And so you shall to-day, my vourneen," replied my father, "but in future you must do something to get your own dinner ;

there's not praties enow for the whole of ye. Will you go to the *say* ? ” “ I'll just step down and look at it,” says I, for we lived but sixteen Irish miles from the coast ; so when I had finished my meal, which did not take long, for want of ammunition, I trotted down to the Cove to see what a ship might be like, and I happened upon a large one sure enough, for there lay a three-decker with an admiral's flag at the fore. “ May be you'll be so civil as to tell me what ship that is,” said I to a sailor on the pier. “ It's the Queen Charlotte,” replied he, “ of one hundred and twenty guns.” Now when I looked at her size, and compared her with all the little smacks and hoys lying about her, I very naturally asked how old she was ; he replied, that she was no more than three years old. “ But three years old ! ” thought I to myself ; “ it's a fine vessel you'll be when you'll come of age, if you grow at that rate : you'll be as tall as the top of Bencrow,” (that's a mountain we have in our parts). You see, Peter, I was a fool at that time, just as you are now ; but by-and-bye, when you've had as many thrashings as I have had, you may chance to be as clever. I went back to my father, and told him all I had seen, and he replied, that if I liked it I might be a midshipman on board of her, with nine hundred men under my command. He forgot to say how many I should have over me, but I found that out afterwards. I agreed, and my father ordered his pony and went to the lord lieutenant, for he had interest enough for that. The lord lieutenant spoke to

the admiral, who was staying at the palace, and I was ordered on board as midshipman. My father fitted me out pretty handsomely, telling all the tradesmen that their bills should be paid with my first prize-money, and thus, by promises and blarney, he got credit for all I wanted. At last all was ready : Father M'Grath gave me his blessing, and told me that if I died like an O'Brien, he would say a power of masses for the good of my soul. " May you never have the trouble, sir," said I. " Och, trouble ! a pleasure, my dear boy," replied he, for he was a very polite man ; so off I went with my big chest, not quite so full as it ought to have been, for my mother cribbed one half of my stock for my brothers and sisters. " I hope to be back again soon, father," said I as I took my leave. " I hope not, my dear boy," replied he ; " a'n't you provided for, and what more would ye have ? " So, after a deal of bother, I was fairly on board, and I parted company with my chest, for I stayed on deck, and that went down below. I stared about with all my eyes for some time, when who should be coming off but the captain, and the officers were ordered on deck to receive him. I wanted to have a quiet survey of him, so I took up my station on one of the guns, that I might examine him at my leisure. The boatswain whistled, the marines presented arms, and the officers all took off their hats as the captain came on the deck, and then the guard was dismissed, and they all walked about the deck as before ; but I found it very pleasant

to be astride on the gun, so I remained where I was. "What do you mane by that, you big young scoundrel?" says he, when he saw me. "It's nothing at all I mane," replied I; "but what do you mane by calling an O'Brien a scoundrel?" "Who is he?" said the captain to the first lieutenant. "Mr. O'Brien, who joined the ship about an hour since." "Don't you know better than to sit upon a gun?" said the captain. "To be sure I do," replied I, "when there's anything better to sit upon." "He knows no better, sir," observed the first lieutenant. "Then he must be taught," replied the captain. "Mr. O'Brien, since you have perched yourself on that gun to please yourself, you will now continue there for two hours to please me. Do you understand, sir? you'll ride on that gun for two hours." "I understand, sir," replied I; "but I am afraid that he won't move without spurs, although there's plenty of *metal* in him." The captain turned away and laughed as he went into his cabin, and all the officers laughed, and I laughed too, for I perceived no great hardship in sitting down an hour or two, any more than I do now. Well, I soon found that, like a young bear, all my troubles were to come. The first month was nothing but fighting and squabbling with my messmates; they called me a *raw* Irishman, and *raw* I was, sure enough, from the constant thrashings and coltings I received from those who were bigger and stronger than myself; but nothing lasts for ever—as they discovered that whenever they found

blows I could find back, they got tired of it, and left me and my brogue alone. We sailed for the Toolong fleet.'

'What fleet?' inquired I.

'Why, the Toolong fleet, so called, I thought, because they remained too long in harbour, bad luck to them; and then we were off Cape See-see, (devil a bit could we see of them except their mast-heads,) for I don't know how many months. But I forgot to say that I got into another scrape just before we left harbour. It was my watch when they piped to dinner, and I took the liberty to run below, as my mess-mates had a knack of forgetting absent friends. Well, the captain came on board, and there were no side boys, no side ropes, and no officers to receive him. He came on deck foaming with rage, for his dignity was hurt, and he inquired who was the midshipman of the watch. "Mr. O'Brien," said they all. "Devil a bit," replied I, "it was my forenoon watch." "Who relieved you, sir?" said the first lieutenant. "Devil a soul, sir," replied I; "for they were all too busy with their pork and beef." "Then why did you leave the deck without relief?" "Because, sir, my stomach would have had but little relief if I had remained." The captain, who stood by, said, "Do you see those cross-trees, sir?" "Is it those little bits of wood that you mane, on the top there, captain?" "Yes, sir; now just go up there and stay until I call you down. You must be brought to your senses, young man, or you'll have but little prospect in the service." "I've

an idea that I'll have plenty of prospect when I get up there," replied I, " but it's all to please you." So up I went, as I have many a time since, and as you often will, Peter, just to enjoy the fresh air and your own pleasant thoughts, all at one and the same time.

' At last I became much more used to the manners and customs of *say*-going people, and by the time that I had been fourteen months off Cape See-see, I was considered a very genteel young midshipman, and my messmates, (that is, all that I could thrash, which didn't leave out many,) had a very great respect for me.

' The first time that I put my foot on shore was at Minorca, and then I put my foot into it, (as we say,) for I was nearly killed for a heretic, and only saved by proving myself a true Catholic, which proves that religion is a great comfort in distress, as Father M'Grath used to say. Several of us went on shore, and having dined upon a roast turkey, stuffed with plum-pudding, (for everything else was cooked in oil, and we could not eat it,) and having drunk as much wine as would float a jolly-boat, we ordered donkeys, to take a little equestrian exercise. Some went off tail on end, some with their hind-quarters uppermost, and then the riders went off instead of the donkeys ; some wouldn't go off at all ; as for mine he would go—and where the devil do you think he went ? Why, into the church, where all the people were at mass ; the poor brute was dying with thirst, and smelt water. As soon as he was in, notwithstanding all my tugging and hauling, he

ran his nose into the holy-water font, and drank it all up. Although I thought, that seeing how few Christians have any religion, you could not expect much from a donkey, yet I was very much shocked at the sacrilege, and fearful of the consequences. Nor was it without reason, for the people in the church were quite horrified, as well they might be, for the brute drank as much holy water as would have purified the whole town of Port Mahon, suburbs and all to boot. They rose up from their knees and seized me, calling upon all the saints in the calendar. Although I knew what they meant, not a word of their lingo could I speak, to plead for my life, and I was almost torn to pieces before the priest came up. Perceiving the danger I was in, I wiped my finger across the wet nose of the donkey, crossed myself, and then went down on my knees to the priests, crying out *culpa mea*, as all good Catholics do—though 'twas no fault of mine, as I said before, for I tried all I could, and tugged at the brute till my strength was gone. The priests perceived by the manner in which I crossed myself that I was a good Catholic, and guessed that it was all a mistake of the donkey's. They ordered the crowd to be quiet, and sent for an interpreter, when I explained the whole story. They gave me absolution for what the donkey had done, and after that, as it was very rare to meet an English officer who was a good Christian, I was in great favour during my stay at Minorca, and was living in plenty, paying for nothing, and as happy as a cricket. So the

jackass proved a very good friend, and, to reward him, I hired him every day, and galloped him all over the island. But, at last, it occurred to me that I had broken my leave, for I was so happy on shore that I quite forgot that I had only permission for twenty-four hours, and I should not have remembered it so soon, had it not been for a party of marines, headed by a serjeant, who took me by the collar, and dragged me off my donkey. I was taken on board, and put under an arrest for my misconduct. Now, Peter, I don't know anything more agreeable than being put under an arrest. Nothing to do all day but eat and drink, and please yourself, only forbid to appear on the quarter-deck, the only place that a midshipman wishes to avoid. Whether it was to punish me more severely, or whether he forgot all about me, I can't tell, but it was nearly two months before I was sent for to the cabin : and the captain, with a most terrible frown, said, that he trusted that my punishment would be a warning to me, and that now I might return to my duty. "Plase your honour," said I, "I don't think that I've been punished enough yet." "I am glad to find that you are so penitent, but you are forgiven, so take care that you do not oblige me to put you again in confinement." So, as there was no persuading him, I was obliged to return to my duty again ; but I made a resolution that I would get into another scrape again as soon as I dared——'

'Sail on the starboard-bow !' cried the lookout man.

‘Very well,’ replied the master; ‘Mr. O’Brien—where’s Mr. O’Brien?’

‘Is it me you mane, sir?’ said O’Brien, walking up to the master, for he had sat down so long in the topsail-halyard rack, that he was wedged in and could not get out immediately.

‘Yes, sir; go forward, and see what that vessel is.’

‘Aye, aye, sir,’ said O’Brien. ‘And Mr. Simple,’ continued the master, ‘go down and bring me up my night-glass.’

‘Yes, sir,’ replied I. I had no idea of a night-glass; and as I observed that about this time his servant brought him up a glass of grog, I thought it very lucky that I knew what he meant. ‘Take care that you don’t break it, Mr. Simple.’ ‘O then, I’m all right,’ thought I; ‘he means the tumbler’; so down I went, called up the gun-room steward, and desired him to give me a glass of grog for Mr. Doball. The steward tumbled out in his shirt, mixed the grog, and gave it to me, and I carried it up very carefully to the quarter-deck.

During my absence, the master had called the captain, and in pursuance of his orders, O’Brien had called the first lieutenant, and when I came up the ladder, they were both on deck. As I was ascending I heard the master say, ‘I have sent young Simple down for my night-glass, but he is so long, that I suppose he has made some mistake. He’s but half a fool.’ ‘That I deny,’ replied Mr. Falcon, the first lieutenant, just as I put my foot on the quarter-deck; ‘he’s no fool.’ ‘Perhaps not,’ replied

the master. ‘O, here he is. What made you so long, Mr. Simple—where is my night-glass?’

‘Here it is, sir,’ replied I, handing him the tumbler of grog; ‘I told the steward to make it stiff.’ The captain and the first lieutenant burst out into a laugh—for Mr. Doball was known to be very fond of grog; the former walked aft to conceal his mirth; but the latter remained. Mr. Doball was in a great rage. ‘Did I not say that the boy was half a fool?’ cried he to the first lieutenant. ‘At all events, I’ll not allow that he has proved himself so in this instance,’ replied Mr. Falcon, ‘for he has hit the right nail on the head.’ Then the first lieutenant joined the captain, and they both went off laughing. ‘Put it on the capstan, sir,’ said Mr. Doball to me, in an angry voice. ‘I’ll punish you by-and-bye.’ I was very much astonished; I hardly knew whether I had done right or wrong; at all events, thought I to myself, I did it for the best; so I put it on the capstan and walked to my own side of the deck. The captain and first lieutenant then went below, and O’Brien came aft. ‘What vessel is it?’ said I.

‘To the best of my belief, it’s one of your bathing machines going home with dispatches,’ replied he.

‘A bathing machine!’ said I; ‘why I thought that they were hauled up on the beach.’

‘That’s the Brighton sort; but these are made not to go up at all.’

‘What then?’

‘Why, to *go down*, to be sure ; and remarkably well they answer their purpose. I won’t puzzle you any more, my Peter—I’m spaking helligorically, which I believe means telling a hell of a lie. It’s one of your ten-gun brigs, to the best of my knowledge.’

I then told O’Brien what had occurred, and how the master was angry with me. O’Brien laughed very heartily, and told me never to mind, but to keep in the lee-scutters and watch him. ‘A glass of grog is a bait that he’ll play round till he gorges. When you see it to his lips, go up to him boldly, and ask his pardon, if you have offended him, and then, if he’s a good Christian, as I believe him to be, he’ll not refuse it.’

I thought this was very good advice, and I waited under the bulwark on the lee side. I observed that the master made shorter and shorter turns every time, till at last he stopped at the capstan and looked at the grog. He waited about half a minute, and then he took up the tumbler, and drank about half of it. It was very strong, and he stopped to take breath. I thought that this was the right time, and I went up to him. The tumbler was again to his lips, and before he saw me, I said, ‘I hope, sir, you’ll forgive me ; I never heard of a night telescope, and knowing that you had walked so long, I thought you were tired, and wanted something to drink to refresh you.’ ‘Well, Mr. Simple,’ said he, after he had finished the glass, with a deep sigh of pleasure, ‘as you meant kindly, I shall let you off this time ; but re-

collect, that whenever you bring me a glass of grog again, it must not be in the presence of the captain or first lieutenant.' I promised him very faithfully, and went away quite delighted with my having made my peace with him, and more so, that the first lieutenant had said that I was no fool for what I had done.

At last our watch was over, and about two bells I was relieved by the midshipman of the next watch. It is very unfair not to relieve in time, but if I said a word, I was certain to be thrashed the next day upon some pretence or another. On the other hand, the midshipman whom I relieved was also much bigger than I was, and if I was not up before one bell, I was cut down and thrashed by him : so that between the two I kept much more than my share of the watch, except when the master sent me to bed before it was over.

CHAPTER XIII

The first lieutenant prescribes for one of his patients, his prescriptions consisting of *draughts* only—O'Brien finishes the history of his life, in which the proverb of 'the more the merrier' is sadly disproved—*Shipping* a new pair of boots causes the *unshipping* of their owner—Walking home after a ball ; O'Brien meets with an accident.

THE next morning I was on deck at seven bells, to see the hammocks stowed, when I was witness to Mr. Falcon, the first lieutenant, having recourse to one of his remedies to cure a mizen-top boy of smoking, a practice to which he had a great aversion. He never interfered with the men smoking in the galley, or chewing tobacco ; but he prevented the boys, that is, lads under twenty or thereabouts, from indulging in the habit too early. The first lieutenant smelt the tobacco as the boy passed him on the quarter-deck. 'Why, Neill, you have been smoking,' said the first lieutenant. 'I thought you were aware that I did not permit such lads as you to use tobacco.'

'If you please, sir,' replied the mizen-top-man, touching his hat, 'I've got worms, and they say that smoking be good for them.'

'Good for them !' said the first lieutenant ; 'yes, very good for them, but very bad for you. Why, my good fellow, they'll thrive upon tobacco until they grow as large as conger eels.'

Heat is what the worms are fond of ; but cold—cold will kill them. Now I'll cure you. Quarter-master, come here. Walk this boy up and down the weather gangway, and every time you get forward abreast of the main-tack block, put his mouth to windward, squeeze him sharp by the nape of the neck until he opens his mouth wide, and there keep him and let the cold air blow down his throat, while you count ten ; then walk him aft, and when you are forward again proceed as before.—Cold kills worms, my poor boy, not tobacco—I wonder that you are not dead by this time.'

The quarter-master, who liked the joke, as did all the seamen, seized hold of the lad, and as soon as they arrived forward, gave him such a squeeze of the neck as to force him to open his mouth, if it were only to cry with pain. The wind was very fresh, and blew into his mouth so strong, that it actually whistled while he was forced to keep it open ; and thus, he was obliged to walk up and down, cooling his inside, for nearly two hours, when the first lieutenant sent for him, and told him, that he thought all the worms must be dead by that time, but if they were not, the lad was not to apply his own remedies, but come to him for another dose. However, the boy was of the same opinion as the first lieutenant, and never complained of worms again.

A few nights afterwards, when we had the middle-watch, O'Brien proceeded with his story.

'Where was it that I left off?'

‘ You left off at the time that you were taken out of confinement.’

‘ So I did, sure enough ; and it was with no good will that I went to my duty. However, as there was no help for it, I walked up and down the deck as before, with my hands in my pockets, thinking of old Ireland and my great ancestor, Brien Borru. And so I went on behaving myself like a real gentleman, and getting into no more scrapes, until the fleet put into the Cove of Cork, and I found myself within a few miles of my father’s house. You may suppose that the anchor had hardly kissed the mud, before I went to the first lieutenant and asked leave to go on shore. Now the first lieutenant was not in the sweetest of tempers, seeing as how the captain had been hauling him over the coals for not carrying on the duty according to his satisfaction. So he answered me very gruffly, that I should not leave the ship. “ O bother ! ” said I to myself, “ this will never do.” So up I walked to the captain, and touching my hat, reminded him that “ I had a father and mother, and a pretty sprinkling of brothers and sisters, who were dying to see me, and that I hoped that he would give me leave.” “ Ax the first lieutenant,” said he, turning away. “ I have, sir,” replied I, “ and he says that the devil a bit shall I put my foot on shore.” “ Then you have misbehaved yourself,” said the captain. “ Not a bit of it, Captain Willis,” replied I ; “ it’s the first lieutenant who has misbehaved.” “ How, sir ? ” answered he, in an angry tone. “ Why, sir, didn’t he misbe-

have just now, in not carrying on the duty according to your will and pleasure ? and didn't you serve him out just as he deserved—and isn't he sulky because you did—and ar'n't that the reason why I'm not to go on shore ? You see, your honour, it's all true as I said ; and the first lieutenant has misbehaved, and not I. I hope you will allow me to go on shore, captain, God bless you ! and make some allowance for my parental feelings towards the arthers of my existence." "Have you any fault to find with Mr. O'Brien ?" said the captain to the first lieutenant, as he came aft. "No more than I have with midshipmen in general ; but I believe it is not the custom for officers to ask leave to go on shore before the sails are furled and yards squared." "Very true," replied the captain ; "therefore, Mr. O'Brien, you must wait until the watch is called, and then, if you ask the first lieutenant, I have no doubt but you will have leave granted to you to go and see your friends." "Thank'e kindly, sir," replied I ; and I hoped that the yards and sails would be finished off as soon as possible, for my heart was in my mouth, and I felt that if I had been kept much longer, it would have flown on shore before me.

' I thought myself very clever in this business, but I was never a greater fool in my life ; for there was no such hurry to have gone on shore, and the first lieutenant never forgave me for appealing to the captain—but of that by-and-bye, and all in good time. At last I obtained a grumbling assent to my going on shore, and

off I went like a sky-rocket. Being in a desperate hurry, I hired a jaunting car to take me to my father's house. "Is it the O'Brien of Ballyhinch that you mane?" inquired the spalpeen who drove the horse. "Sure it is," replied I; "and how is he, and all the noble family of the O'Briens?" "All well enough, bating the boy Tim, who caught a bit of confusion in his head the other night at the fair, and now lies at home in bed quite insensible to mate or drink; but the doctors give hopes of his recovery, as all the O'Briens are known to have such thick heads." "What do you mane by that, bad manners to you?" said I: "but poor Tim—how did it happen—was there a fight?" "Not much of a fight—only a bit of a skrummage—three crowner's inquests, no more." "But you are not going the straight road, you thief," said I, seeing that he had turned off to the left. "I've my reasons for that, your honour," replied he; "I always turn away from the Castle out of principle—I lost a friend there, and it makes me melancholy." "How came that to happen?" "All by accident, your honour; they hung my poor brother Patrick there, because he was a bad hand at arithmetic." "He should have gone to a better school then," said I. "I've an idea that it was a bad school that he was brought up in," replied he, with a sigh. "He was a cattle-dealer, your honour, and one day, somehow or another, he'd a cow too much—all for not knowing how to count, your honour—bad luck to his schoolmaster!" "All that

may be very true," said I, "and pace be to his soul ; but I don't see why you are to drag me, that's in such a hurry, two miles out of my way, out of principle." "Is your honour in a hurry to get home? Then I'll be thinking they'll not be in such a hurry to see you." "And who told you that my name was O'Brien, you baste?—and do you dare to say that my friends won't be glad to see me?" "Plase your honour, it's all an idea of mine—so say no more about it. Only this I know ; Father M'Grath, who gives me absolution, tould me the other day that I ought to pay him, and not run in debt, and then run away, like Terence O'Brien, who went to say without paying for his shirts, and his shoes, and his stockings, nor anything else, and who would live to be hanged as sure as St. Patrick swam over the Liffey with his head under his arm." "Bad luck to that Father M'Grath," cried I ; "devil burn me, but I'll be revenged upon him !"

'By that time we had arrived at the door of my father's house. I paid the rapparee, and in I popped. There was my father and mother, and all my brothers and sisters, (bating Tim, who was in bed sure enough, and died next day,) and that baste, Father M'Grath, to boot. When my mother saw me she ran to me and hugged me as she wept on my neck, and then she wiped her eyes and sat down again ; but nobody else said "How d'ye do?" or opened their mouths to me. I said to myself, "Sure there's some trifling mistake here," but I held my tongue. At last they all opened their

mouths with a vengeance. My father commenced—"Ar'n't you ashamed on yourself, Terence O'Brien?"—"Ar'n't you ashamed on yourself, Terence O'Brien?" cried Father M'Grath. "Ar'n't you ashamed on yourself?" cried out all my brothers and sisters in full chorus, whilst my poor mother put her apron to her eyes and said nothing. "The devil a bit for myself, but very much ashamed for you all," replied I, "to treat me in this manner. What's the meaning of all this?" "Haven't they seized my two cows to pay for your toggery, you spalpeen?" cried my father. "Haven't they taken the hay to pay for your shoes and stockings?" cried Father M'Grath. "Haven't they taken the pig to pay for that ugly hat of yours?" cried my eldest sister. "And haven't they taken my hens to pay for that dirk of yours?" cried another. "And all our best furniture to pay for your white shirts and black cravats?" cried Murdock, my brother. "And haven't we been starved to death ever since?" cried they all. "Och hone!" said my mother. "The devil they have!" said I, when they'd all done. "Sure I'm sorry enough, but it's no fault of mine. Father, didn't you send me to say?" "Yes, you rapparee; but didn't you promise—or didn't I promise for you, which is all one and the same thing—that you'd pay it all back with your prize-money—and where is it? answer that, Terence O'Brien." "Where is it, father? I'll tell you—it's where next Christmas is—coming, but not come yet." "Spake to him,

Father M'Grath," said my father. "Is not that a lie of yours, Terence O'Brien, that you're after telling now?" said Father M'Grath; "give me the money." "It's no lie, Father M'Grath; if it pleased you to die to-morrow, the devil of a shilling have I to jingle on your tombstone for good luck, bating those three or four, which you may divide between you," and I threw them on the floor.

"Terence O'Brien," said Father M'Grath, "it's absolution that you'll be wanting to-morrow, after all your sins and enormities; and the devil a bit shall you have—take that now."

"Father M'Grath," replied I very angrily, "it's no absolution that I'll want from you, anyhow—take that now."

"Then you have had your share of heaven; for I'll keep you out of it, you wicked monster," said Father M'Grath—"take that now."

"If it's no better than a midshipman's berth," replied I, "I'd just as soon stay out; but I'll creep in in spite of you—take that now, Father M'Grath."

"And who is to save your soul, and send you to heaven, if I don't, you wicked wretch? but I'll see you d——d first—so take that now, Terence O'Brien."

"Then I'll turn Protestant and damn the Pope—take that now, Father M'Grath."

At this last broadside of mine, my father and all my brothers and sisters raised a cry of horror, and my mother burst into tears. Father M'Grath seized hold of the pot of holy water, and dipping in the little whisk, began

to sprinkle the room, saying a Latin prayer, while they all went on squalling at me. At last, my father seized the stool, which he had been seated upon, and threw it at my head. I dodged, and it knocked down Father M'Grath, who had just walked behind me in full song. I knew that it was all over after that, so I sprang over his carcase and gained the door. "Good morning to ye all, and better manners to you next time we meet," cried I, and off I set as fast as I could for the ship.

'I was melancholy enough as I walked back, and thought of what had passed. "I need not have been in such a confounded hurry," said I to myself, "to ask leave, thereby affronting the first lieutenant"; and I was very sorry for what I had said to the priest, for my conscience thumped me very hard at having even pretended that I'd turn Protestant, which I never intended to do, nor never will, but live and die a good Catholic, as all my posterity have done before me, and, as I trust, all my ancestors will for generations to come. Well, I arrived on board, and the first lieutenant was very savage. I hoped he would get over it, but he never did; and he continued to treat me so ill, that I determined to quit the ship, which I did as soon as we arrived in Cawsand Bay. The captain allowed me to go, for I told him the whole truth of the matter, and he saw that it was true; so he recommended me to the captain of a jackass frigate, who was in want of midshipmen.'

'What do you mean by a jackass frigate?' inquired I.



O'Brien's Visit Home



‘ I mean one of your twenty-eight gun ships, so called, because there is as much difference between them and a real frigate, like the one we are sailing in, as there is between a donkey and a race-horse. Well, the ship was no sooner brought down to the dock-yard to have her ballast taken in, than our captain came down to her—a little, thin, spare man, but a man of weight nevertheless, for he brought a great pair of scales with him, and weighed everything that was put on board. I forget his real name, but the sailors christened him Captain Avoir-du-*pois*. He had a large book, and in it he inserted the weight of the ballast, and of the shot, water, provisions, coals, standing and running rigging, cables, and everything else. Then he weighed all the men, and all the midshipmen, and all the midshipmen’s chests, and all the officers, with everything belonging to them : lastly, he weighed himself, which did not add much to the sum total. I don’t exactly know what this was for ; but he was always talking about centres of gravity, displacement of fluid, and Lord knows what. I believe it was to find out the longitude, somehow or other, but I didn’t remain long enough in her to know the end of it ; for one day I brought on board a pair of new boots, which I forgot to report, that they might be put into the scales, which swang on the gangway ; and whether the captain thought that they would sink his ship, or for what I cannot tell, but he ordered me to quit her immediately—so there I was adrift again. I packed up my traps and went on

shore, putting on my new boots out of spite, and trod into all the mud and mire I could meet, and walked up and down from Plymouth to Dock until I was tired, as a punishment to them, until I wore the scoundrels out in a fortnight.

‘ One day I was in the dock-yard, looking at a two-decker in the basin, just brought forward for service, and I inquired who was to be the captain. They told me that his name was O’Connor. Then he’s a countryman of mine, thought I, and I’ll try my luck. So I called at Goud’s Hotel, where he was lodging, and requested to speak with him. I was admitted, and told him, with my best bow, that I had come as a volunteer for his ship, and that my name was O’Brien. As it happened, he had some vacancies, and liking my brogue, he asked me in what ships I had served. I told him, and also my reason for quitting my last—which was, because I was turned out of it. I explained the story of the boots, and he made inquiries, and found that it was all true ; and then he gave me a vacancy as master’s mate. We were ordered to South America ; and the trade winds took us there in a jiffy. I liked my captain and officers very much, and what was better, we took some good prizes. But, somehow or other, I never had the luck to remain long in one ship, and that by no fault of mine ; at least, not in this instance. All went on as smooth as possible, until one day, the captain took us on shore to a ball, at one of the peaceable districts. We had a very merry

night of it ; but as luck would have it, I had the morning watch to keep, and see the decks cleaned, and, as I never neglected my duty, I set off about three o'clock in the morning, just at break of day, to go on board of the ship. I was walking along the sands, thinking of the pretty girl that I'd been dancing with, and had got about half way to the ship, when three raparees of Spanish soldiers came from behind a rock and attacked me with their swords and bayonets. I had only my dirk, but I was not to be run through for nothing, so I fought them as long as I could. I finished one fellow, but at last they finished me ; for a bayonet passed through my body, and I forgot all about it. Well, it appears—for I can only say to the best of my knowledge and belief—that after they had killed me, they stripped me naked and buried me in the sand, carrying away with them the body of their comrade. So there I was—dead and buried.'

' But O'Brien,' said I——

' Whist—hold your tongue—you've not heard the end of it. Well, I had been buried about an hour—but not very deep it appears, for they were in too great a hurry—when a fisherman and his daughter came along the beach, on their way to the boat ; and the daughter, God bless her ! did me the favour to tread upon my nose. It was clear that she had never trod upon an Irishman's nose before, for it surprised her, and she looked down to see what was there, and not seeing anything, she tried it again with her foot, and then she scraped

off the sand, and discovered my pretty face. I was quite warm and still breathing, for the sand had stopped the blood, and prevented my bleeding to death. The fisherman pulled me out, and took me on his back to the house where the captain and officers were still dancing. When he brought me in, there was a great cry from the ladies, not because I was murdered, for they are used to it in those countries, but because I was naked, which they considered a much more serious affair. I was put to bed, and a boat dispatched on board for our doctor ; and in a few hours I was able to speak, and tell them how it happened. But I was too ill to move when the ship sailed, which she was obliged to do in a day or two afterwards, so the captain made out my discharge, and left me there. The family were French, and I remained with them for six months before I could obtain a passage home, during which I learnt their language, and a very fair allowance of Spanish to boot. When I arrived in England, I found that the prizes had been sold, and that the money was ready for distribution. I produced my certificate, and received £167 for my share. So it's come at last, thought I.

‘ I never had such a handful of money in my life ; but I hope I shall again very soon. I spread it out on the table as soon as I got home, and looked at it, and then I said to myself, “ Now, Terence O’Brien, will you keep this money to yourself, or send it home ? ” Then I thought of Father M’Grath, and the stool that

was thrown at my head, and I was very near sweeping it all back into my pocket. But then I thought of my mother, and of the cows, and the pig, and the furniture, all gone ; and of my brothers and sisters wanting praties, and I made a vow that I'd send every farthing of it to them, after which Father M'Grath would no longer think of not giving me absolution. So I sent them every doit, only reserving for myself the pay which I had received, amounting to about £30 : and I never felt more happy in my life than when it was safe in the post-office, and fairly out of my hands. I wrote a bit of a letter to my father at the time, which was to this purpose :

‘ HONOURED FATHER ;

‘ Since our last pleasant meeting, at which you threw the stool at my head, missing the pigeon and hitting the crow, I have been dead and buried, but am now quite well, thank God, and want no absolution from Father M'Grath, bad luck to him. And what's more to the point, I have just received a batch of prize-money, the first I have handled since I have served his majesty, and every farthing of which I now send to you, that you may get back your old cows, and the pig, and all the rest of the articles seized to pay for my fitting-out ; so never again ask me whether I am not ashamed of myself ; more shame to you for abusing a dutiful son like myself, who went to sea at your bidding, and has never had a real good potato down his throat ever since. I'm a true O'Brien,

tell my mother, and don't mane to turn Protestant, but uphold the religion of my country ; although the devil may take Father M'Grath and his holy water to boot. I sha'n't come and see you, as perhaps you may have another stool ready for my head, and may take better aim next time. So no more at present from your affectionate son,

'TERENCE O'BRIEN.'

'About three weeks afterwards I received a letter from my father, telling me that I was a real O'Brien, and that if any one dared hint to the contrary, he would break every bone in his body ; that they had received the money, and thanked me for a real gentleman as I was ; that I should have the best stool in the house next time I came, not for my head, but for my tail ; that Father M'Grath sent me his blessing, and had given me absolution for all I had done, or should do for the next ten years to come ; that my mother had cried with joy at my dutiful behaviour ; and that all my brothers and sisters, (bating Tim, who had died the day after I left them,) wished me good luck, and plenty more prize-money to send home to them.

'This was all very pleasant ; and I had nothing left on my mind but to get another ship ; so I went to the port-admiral, and told him how it was that I left my last : and he said, "that being dead and buried was quite sufficient reason for any one leaving his ship, and that he would procure me another, now that I had come to life again." I was sent on

board of the guardship, where I remained about ten days, and then was sent round to join this frigate—and so my story's ended ; and there's eight bells striking—so the watch is ended too ; jump down, Peter, and call Robinson, and tell him that I'll trouble him to forget to go to sleep again as he did last time, and leave me here kicking my heels, contrary to the rules and regulations of the service.'

CHAPTER XIV

The first lieutenant has more patients—Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, lets me into the secret of his gentility.

BEFORE I proceed with my narrative, I wish to explain to the reader that my history was not written in after-life, when I had obtained a greater knowledge of the world. When I first went to sea, I promised my mother that I would keep a journal of what passed, with my reflections upon it. To this promise I rigidly adhered, and since I have been my own master, these journals have remained in my possession. In writing, therefore, the early part of my adventures, everything is stated as it was impressed on my mind at the time. Upon many points I have since had reason to form a different opinion from that which is recorded, and upon many others I have since laughed heartily at my folly and simplicity ; but still, I have thought it advisable to let the ideas of the period remain, rather than correct them by those of dear-bought experience. A boy of fifteen, brought up in a secluded country town, cannot be expected to reason and judge as a young man who has seen much of life, and passed through a variety of adventures. The reader must therefore remember, that I have referred to my journal for the opinions and feelings which guided me between each distinct anniversary of my existence.

We had now been cruising for six weeks, and I found that my profession was much more agreeable than I had anticipated. My desire to please was taken for the deed ; and, although I occasionally made a blunder, yet the captain and first lieutenant seemed to think that I was attentive to my duty to the best of my ability, and only smiled at my mistakes. I also discovered, that, however my natural capacity may have been estimated by my family, that it was not so depreciated here ; and every day I felt more confidence in myself, and hoped, by attention and diligence, to make up for a want of natural endowment. There certainly is something in the life of a sailor which enlarges the mind. When I was at home, six months before, I allowed other people to think for me, and acted wholly on the leading-strings of their suggestions ; on board, to the best of my ability, I thought for myself. I became happy with my messmates—those who were harsh upon me left off, because I never resented their conduct, and those who were kind to me were even kinder than before. The time flew away quickly, I suppose because I knew exactly what I had to do, and each day was the counterpart of the ensuing.

The first lieutenant was one of the most amusing men I ever knew, yet he never relaxed from the discipline of the service, or took the least liberty with either his superiors or inferiors. His humour was principally shown in his various modes of punishment ; and, however severe the punishment was to the party, the

manner of inflicting it was invariably a source of amusement to the remainder of the ship's company. I often thought, that although no individual liked being punished, yet that all the ship's company were quite pleased when a punishment took place. He was very particular about his decks ; they were always as white as snow, and nothing displeased him so much as their being soiled. It was for that reason that he had such an objection to the use of tobacco. There were spitting-pans placed in different parts of the decks for the use of the men, that they might not dirty the planks with the tobacco-juice. Sometimes a man in his hurry forgot to use these pans ; but, as the mess to which the stain might be opposite had their grog stopped if the party were not found out, they took good care not only to keep a look-out, but to inform against the offender. Now the punishment for the offence was as follows—the man's hands were tied behind his back, and a large tin spitting-box fixed to his chest by a strap over the shoulders. All the other boxes on the lower deck were taken away, and he was obliged to walk there, ready to attend the summons of any man who might wish to empty his mouth of the tobacco-juice. The other men were so pleased at the fancy, that they spat twice as much as before, for the pleasure of making him run about. Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, called it 'the first lieutenant's *perambulating* spitting-pan.' He observed to me one day, 'that really Mr. Falcon was such an *epicure* about his decks,

that he was afraid to pudding an anchor on the forecastle.'

I was much amused one morning watch that I kept. We were stowing the hammocks in the quarter-deck nettings, when one of the boys came up with his hammock on his shoulder, and as he passed the first lieutenant, the latter perceived that he had a quid of tobacco in his cheek. 'What have you got there, my good lad—a gum-boil?—your cheek is very much swelled.' 'No, sir,' replied the boy, 'there's nothing at all the matter.' 'O there must be ; it is a bad tooth, then. Open your mouth, and let me see.' Very reluctantly the boy opened his mouth, and discovered a large roll of tobacco-leaf. 'I see, I see,' said the first lieutenant, 'your mouth wants overhauling, and your teeth cleaning. I wish we had a dentist on board ; but as we have not, I will operate as well as I can. Send the armourer up here with his tongs.' When the armourer made his appearance, the boy was made to open his mouth, while the chaw of tobacco was extracted with his rough instrument. 'There now,' said the first lieutenant, 'I am sure that you must feel better already ; you never could have had any appetite. Now, captain of the afterguard, bring a piece of old canvas and some sand here, and clean his teeth nicely.' The captain of the afterguard came forward, and putting the boy's head between his knees, scrubbed his teeth well with the sand and canvas for two or three minutes. 'There, that will do,' said the first lieutenant. 'Now, my

little fellow, your mouth is nice and clean, and you'll enjoy your breakfast. It was impossible for you to have eaten anything with your mouth in such a nasty state. When it's dirty again, come to me, and I'll be your dentist.'

One day I was on the forecastle with Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, who was very kind to me. He had been showing me how to make the various knots and bends of rope which are used in our service. I am afraid that I was very stupid, but he showed me over and over again, until I learnt how to make them. Amongst others, he taught me a fisherman's bend, which he pronounced to be the *king* of all knots ; 'and, Mr. Simple,' continued he, 'there is a moral in that knot. You observe, that when the parts are drawn the right way, and together, the more you pull, the faster they hold, and the more impossible to untie them ; but see, by hauling them apart, how a little difference, a pull the other way, immediately disunites them, and then how easy they cast off in a moment. That points out the necessity of pulling together in this world, Mr. Simple, when we wish to hold on, and that's a piece of philosophy worth all the twenty-six thousand and odd years of my friend the carpenter, which leads to nothing but a brown study, when he ought to be attending to his duty.'

'Very true, Mr. Chucks, you are the better philosopher of the two.'

'I am the better educated, Mr. Simple, and, I trust, more of a gentleman. I consider a

gentleman to be, to a certain degree, a philosopher ; for very often he is obliged to support his character as such, to put up with what another person may very properly fly in a passion about. I think coolness is the great character-stick of a gentleman. In the service, Mr. Simple, one is obliged to appear angry without indulging the sentiment. I can assure you, that I never lose my temper, even when I use my rattan.'

'Why, then, Mr. Chucks, do you swear so much at the men? surely that is not gentlemanly?'

'Most certainly not, sir. But I must defend myself by observing the very artificial state in which we live on board of a man-of-war. Necessity, my dear Mr. Simple, has no law. You must observe how gently I always commence when I have to find fault. I do that to prove my gentility ; but, sir, my zeal for the service obliges me to alter my language, to prove in the end that I am in earnest. Nothing would afford me more pleasure than to be able to carry on the duty as a gentleman, but that's impossible.'

'I really cannot see why.'

'Perhaps, then, Mr. Simple, you will explain to me why the captain and first lieutenant swear?'

'That I do not pretend to answer, but they only do so upon an emergency.'

'Exactly so ; but, sir, their 'mergency is my daily and hourly duty. In the continual working of the ship I am answerable for all that

goes amiss. The life of a boatswain is a life of 'mergency, and therefore I swear.'

'I still cannot allow it to be requisite, and certainly it is sinful.'

'Excuse me, my dear sir ; it is absolutely requisite, and not at all sinful. There is one language for the pulpit, and another for on board ship, and, in either situation, a man must make use of those terms most likely to produce the necessary effect upon his listeners. Whether it is from long custom of the service, or from the indifference of a sailor to all common things and language, (I can't exactly explain myself, Mr. Simple, but I know what I mean,) perhaps constant excitement may do, and therefore he requires more "stimilis," as they call it, to make him move. Certain it is, that common parlancy won't do with a common seaman. It is not here as in the scriptures, "Do this, and he doeth it" ; (by-the-bye, that chap must have had his soldiers in tight order ;) but it is, "Do this, d—n your eyes," and then it is done directly. The order to *do* just carries the weight of a cannon shot, but it wants the propelling power—the d—n is the gunpowder which sets it flying in the execution of its duty. Do you comprehend me, Mr. Simple ?'

'I perfectly understand you, Mr. Chucks, and I cannot help remarking, and that without flattery, that you are very different from the rest of the warrant officers. Where did you receive your education ?'

'Mr. Simple, I am here a boatswain with a

clean shirt, and—I say it myself, and no one dare gainsay it—also with a thorough knowledge of my duty. But although I do not say that I ever was better off, I can say this, that I’ve been in the best society, in the company of lords and ladies. I once dined with your grandfather.’

‘That’s more than ever I did, for he never asked me, nor took the least notice of me,’ replied I.

‘What I state is true. I did not know that he was your grandfather until yesterday, when I was talking with Mr. O’Brien ; but I perfectly recollect him, although I was very young at that time. Now, Mr. Simple, if you will promise me as a gentleman, (and I know you are one,) that you will not repeat what I tell you, then I’ll let you into the history of my life.’

‘Mr. Chucks, as I am a gentleman I never will divulge it until you are dead and buried, and not then if you do not wish it.’

‘When I am dead and buried, you may do as you please ; it may then be of service to other people, although my story is not a very long one.’

Mr. Chucks then sat down upon the fore-end of the booms by the funnel, and I took my place by his side, when he commenced as follows :

‘My father was a boatswain before me—one of the old school, rough as a bear, and drunken as a Gosport fiddler. My mother was—my mother, and I shall say no more. My father

was invalided for harbour duty after a life of intoxication, and died shortly afterwards. In the meantime I had been, by the kindness of the port-admiral's wife, educated at a foundation school. I was thirteen when my father died, and my mother, not knowing what to do with me, wished to bind me apprentice to a merchant vessel ; but this I refused, and, after six months' quarrelling on the subject, I decided the point by volunteering in the *Narcissus* frigate. I believe that my gentlemanly ideas were innate, Mr. Simple ; I never, as a child, could bear the idea of the merchant service. After I had been a week on board, I was appointed servant to the purser, where I gave such satisfaction by my alertness and dexterity, that the first lieutenant took me away from the purser to attend upon himself, so that in two months I was a person of such consequence as to create a disturbance in the gun-room, for the purser was very angry, and many of the officers took his part. It was whispered that I was the son of the first lieutenant, and that he was aware of it. How far that may be true I know not, but there was a likeness between us ; and my mother, who was a very pretty woman, attended his ship many years before as a bum-boat girl. I can't pretend to say anything about it, but this I do say, Mr. Simple—and many will blame me for it, but I can't help my natural feelings—that I had rather be the by-blow of a gentleman, than the 'gitimate offspring of a boatswain and his wife. There's no chance of good blood in your veins in the latter

instance, whereas, in the former you may have stolen a drop or two. It so happened, that after I had served the first lieutenant for about a year, a young lord, (I must not mention his name, Mr. Simple,) was sent to sea by his friends, or by his own choice, I don't know which, but I was told that his uncle, who was 'zeckative, and had an interest in his death, persuaded him to go. A lord at that period, some twenty-five years ago, was a rarity in the service, and they used to salute him when he came on board. The consequence was, that the young lord must have a servant to himself, although all the rest of the midshipmen had but one servant between them. The captain inquired who was the best boy in the ship, and the purser, to whom he appealed, recommended me. Accordingly, much to the annoyance of the first lieutenant, (for first lieutenants in those days did not assume as they do now, not that I refer to Mr. Falcon, who is a gentleman,) I was immediately surrendered to his lordship. I had a very easy, comfortable life of it—I did little or nothing; if inquired for when all hands were turned up, I was cleaning his lordship's boots, or brushing his lordship's clothes, and there was nothing to be said when his lordship's name was mentioned. We went to the Mediterranean, (because his lordship's mamma wished it,) and we had been there about a year, when his lordship ate so many grapes that he was seized with a dysentery. He was ill for three weeks, and then he requested to be sent to Malta in a transport going

to Gibraltar, or rather to the Barbary coast, for bullocks. He became worse every day, and made his will, leaving me all his effects on board, which I certainly deserved for the kindness with which I had nursed him. Off Malta we fell in with a xebeque, bound to Civita Vecchia, and the captain of the transport, anxious to proceed, advised our going on board of her, as the wind was light and contrary, and these Mediterranean vessels sailed better on a wind than the transport. My master, who was now sinking fast, consented, and we changed our ships. The next day he died, and a gale of wind came on, which prevented us from gaining the port for several days, and the body of his lordship not only became so offensive, but affected the superstition of the Catholic sailors so much, that it was hove overboard. None of the people could speak English, nor could I speak Maltese : they had no idea who we were, and I had plenty of time for cogitation. I had often thought what a fine thing it was to be a lord, and as often wished that I had been born one. The wind was still against us, when a merchant vessel ran down to us, that had left Civita Vecchia for Gibraltar. I desired the captain of the xebeque to make a signal of distress, or rather I did myself, and the vessel, which proved to be English, bore down to us.

‘ I manned the boat to go on board, and the idea came into my head, that, although they might refuse to take me, that they would not refuse a lord. I put on the midshipman’s

uniform belonging to his lordship, (but then certainly belonging to me,) and went alongside of the merchant vessel ; I told them that I had left my ship for the benefit of my health, and wanted a passage to Gibraltar, on my way home. My title, and immediate acceptance of the terms demanded for my passage, was sufficient. My property was brought from the xebeque ; and, of course, as they could not speak English, they could not contradict, even if they suspected. Here, Mr. Simple, I must acknowledge a slight flaw in my early history, which I impart to you in confidence : or otherwise I should not have been able to prove that I was correct in asserting that I had dined with your grandfather. But the temptation was too strong, and I could not resist. Think yourself, Mr. Simple, after having served as a ship's boy—clouted here, kicked here, damned by one, and sent to hell by another—to find myself treated with such respect and deference, and my lorded this and my lorded that, every minute of the day. During my passage to Gibraltar, I had plenty of time for arranging my plans. I hardly need say that my lord's *kit* was valuable ; and what was better, they exactly fitted me. I also had his watches and trinkets, and many other things, besides a bag of dollars. However, they were honestly mine : the only thing that I took was his name, which he had no further occasion for, poor fellow ! But it's no use defending what was wrong—it was dishonest, and there's an end of it.

‘ Now observe, Mr. Simple, how one thing

leads to another. I declare to you, that my first idea of making use of his lordship's name, was to procure a passage to Gibraltar. I then was undecided how to act ; but, as I had charge of his papers and letters to his mother and guardian, I think, indeed I am almost sure—that I should have laid aside my dignity and midshipman's dress, and applied for a passage home to the commissioner of the yard. But it was fated to be otherwise ; for the master of the transport went on shore to report and obtain pratique, and he told them everywhere that young Lord A—— was a passenger with him, going to England for the benefit of his health. In less than half-an-hour, off came the commissioner's boat, and another boat from the governor, requesting the honour of my company, and that I would take a bed at their houses during my stay. What could I do ? I began to be frightened ; but I was more afraid to confess that I was an impostor, for I am sure the master of the transport alone would have kicked me overboard, if I had let him know that he had been so confounded polite to a ship's boy. So I blushed half from modesty and half from guilt, and accepted the invitation of the governor : sending a polite verbal refusal to the commissioner, upon the plea of there being no paper or pens on board. I had so often accompanied my late master, that I knew very well how to conduct myself, and had borrowed a good deal of his air and appearance—indeed, I had a natural taste for gentility.—I could write and read ; not perhaps so well as

I ought to have done, considering the education I had received, but still quite well enough for a lord, and indeed much better than my late master. I knew his signature well enough, although the very idea of being forced to use it made me tremble. However, the die was cast. I ought to observe, that in one point we were not unlike—both had curly light hair and blue eyes ; in other points there was no resemblance. I was by far the better-looking chap of the two ; and as we had been up the Mediterranean for two years, I had no fear of any doubt as to my identity until I arrived in England.

‘Well, Mr. Simple, I dressed myself very carefully, put on my chains and rings, and a little perfume on my handkerchief, and accompanied the aide-de-camp to the governor’s, where I was asked after my mother, Lady ——, and my uncle, my guardian, and a hundred other questions. At first I was much confused, which was attributed to bashfulness ; and so it was, but not of the right sort. But before the day was over, I had become so accustomed to be called “my lord,” and to my situation, that I was quite at my ease, and began to watch the motions and behaviour of the company, that I might regulate my comportment by that of good society. I remained at Gibraltar for a fortnight, and then was offered a passage in a transport ordered to Portsmouth. Being an officer, of course it was free to a certain extent. On my passage to England, I again made up my mind that I would put off my dress and

title as soon as I could escape from observation ; but I was prevented as before. The port-admiral sent off to request the pleasure of my company to dinner. I dared not refuse ; and there I was, my lord, as before, courted and feasted by everybody. Tradesmen called to request the honour of my lordship's custom ; my table at the hotel was covered with cards of all descriptions ; and, to confess the truth, I liked my situation so much, and had been so accustomed to it, that I now began to dislike the idea that one day or other I must resign it, which I determined to do as soon as I quitted the place. My bill at the hotel was very extravagant, and more than I could pay : but the master said it was not of the least consequence : that of course his lordship had not provided himself with cash, just coming from foreign parts, and offered to supply me with money if I required it. This, I will say, I was honest enough to refuse. I left my cards, P.P.C., as they do, Mr. Simple, in all well-regulated society, and set off in the mail for London, where I fully resolved to drop my title, and to proceed to Scotland to his lordship's mother, with the mournful intelligence of his death—for you see, Mr. Simple, no one knew that his lordship was dead. The captain of the transport had put him into the xebeque alive, and the vessel bound to Gibraltar had received him, as they imagined. The captain of the frigate had very soon afterwards advices from Gibraltar, stating his lordship's recovery and return to England. Well, I had not been

in the coach more than five minutes, when who should get in but a gentleman whom I had met at the port-admiral's ; besides which, the coachman and others knew me very well. When I arrived in London, (I still wore my midshipman's uniform,) I went to an hotel recommended to me, as I afterwards found out, the most fashionable in town, my title still following me. I now determined to put off my uniform and dress in plain clothes—my farce was over. I went to bed that night, and the next morning made my appearance in a suit of mufti, making inquiry of the waiter which was the best conveyance to Scotland.

“ Post chay and four, my lord. At what time shall I order it ? ”

“ Oh,” replied I, “ I am not sure that I shall go to-morrow.”

Just at this moment in came the master of the hotel, with the “ Morning Post ” in his hand, making me a low bow, and pointing to the insertion of my arrival at his hotel among the fashionables. This annoyed me ; and now that I found how difficult it was to get rid of my title, I became particularly anxious to be William Chucks, as before. Before twelve o'clock, three or four gentlemen were ushered into my sitting-room, who observing my arrival in that damn'd “ Morning Post,” came to pay their respects ; and before the day was over, I was invited and re-invited by a dozen people. I found that I could not retreat, and I went away with the stream, as I did before at Gibraltar and Portsmouth. For three weeks I

was everywhere ; and if I found it agreeable at Portsmouth, how much more so in London ! But I was not happy, Mr. Simple, because I was a cheat, every moment expecting to be found out. But it really was a nice thing to be a lord.

‘ At last the play was over. I had been enticed by some young men into a gambling-house, where they intended to fleece me ; but, for the first night, they allowed me to win, I think, about 300*l.* I was quite delighted with my success, and had agreed to meet them the next evening ; but when I was at breakfast, with my legs crossed, reading the “ Morning Post,” who should come to see me but my guardian uncle. He knew his nephew’s features too well to be deceived ; and my not recognizing him proved at once that I was an impostor. You must allow me to hasten over the scene which took place—the wrath of the uncle, the confusion in the hotel, the abuse of the waiters, the police-officer, and being dragged into a hackney-coach to Bow Street. There I was examined, and confessed all. The uncle was so glad to find that his nephew was really dead, that he felt no resentment towards me ; and as, after all, I had only assumed a name, but had cheated nobody, except the landlord at Portsmouth, I was sent on board the tender off the Tower, to be drafted into a man-of-war. As for my 300*l.*, my clothes, &c., I never heard any more of them ; they were seized, I presume, by the landlord of the hotel for my bill, and very handsomely he must have

paid himself. I had two rings on my fingers, and a watch in my pocket, when I was sent on board the tender, and I stowed them away very carefully. I had also a few pounds in my purse. I was sent round to Plymouth, where I was drafted into a frigate. After I had been there some time I turned the watch and rings into money, and bought myself a good kit of clothes ; for I could not bear to be dirty. I was put into the mizen-top, and no one knew that I had been a lord.'

' You found some difference, I should think, in your situation ? '

' Yes, I did, Mr. Simple : but I was much happier. I could not forget the ladies, and the dinners, and the opera, and all the delights of London, beside the respect paid to my title, and I often sighed for them ; but the police-officer and Bow-street also came to my recollection, and I shuddered at the remembrance. It had, however, one good effect : I determined to be an officer if I could, and learnt my duty, and worked my way up to quarter-master, and thence to boatswain—and I know my duty, Mr. Simple. But I've been punished for my folly ever since. I formed ideas above my station in life, and cannot help longing to be a gentleman. It's a bad thing for a man to have ideas above his station.'

' You certainly must find some difference between the company in London and that of the warrant officers.'

' It's many years back now, sir ; but I can't get over the feeling. I can't 'sociate with them

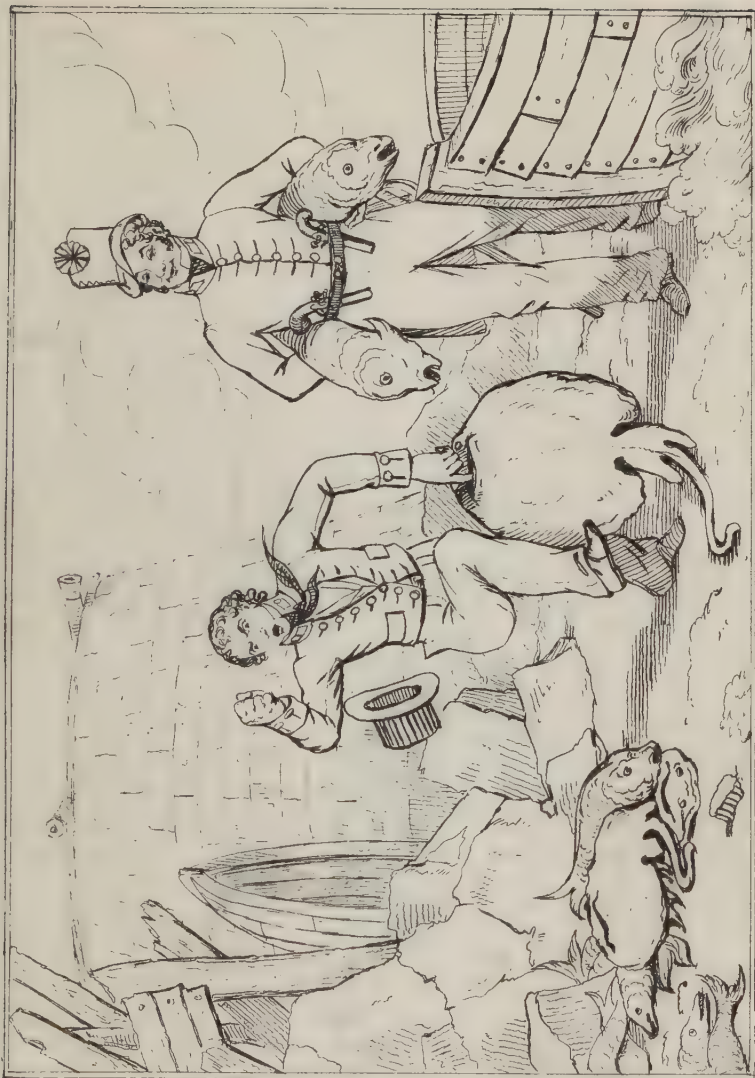
at all. A man may have the feelings of a gentleman, although in a humble capacity ; but how can I be intimate with such people as Mr. Dispart, or Mr. Muddle the carpenter ? All very well in their way, Mr. Simple, but what can you expect from officers who boil their 'tators in a cabbage-net hanging in the ship's coppers, when they know that there is one-third of a stove allowed them to cook their victuals on ? '

CHAPTER XV

I go on service, and am made prisoner by an old lady, who, not able to obtain my hand, takes part of my finger, as a token—O'Brien rescues me—A lee-shore and narrow escape.

Two or three days after this conversation with Mr. Chucks, the captain ran the frigate in-shore, and when within five miles we discovered two vessels under the land. We made all sail in chase, and cut them off from escaping round a sandy point, which they attempted to weather. Finding that they could not effect their purpose, they ran on shore under a small battery of two guns, which commenced firing upon us. The first shot which whizzed between the masts had to me a most terrific sound, but the officers and men laughed at it, so of course I pretended to do the same, but in reality I could see nothing to laugh at. The captain ordered the starboard watch to be piped to quarters, and the boats to be cleared, ready for hoisting out ; we then anchored within a mile of the battery, and returned the fire. In the meantime, the remainder of the ship's company hoisted out and lowered down four boats, which were manned and armed to storm the battery. I was very anxious to go on service, and O'Brien, who had command of the first cutter, allowed me to go with him, on condition that I stowed myself away under the fore-sheets, that the captain

might not see me before the boats had shoved off. This I did, and was not discovered. We pulled in abreast towards the battery, and in less than ten minutes the boats were run on the beach, and we jumped out. The Frenchmen fired a gun at us as we pulled close to the shore, and then ran away, so that we took possession without any fighting, which, to confess the truth, I was not sorry for, as I did not think that I was old or strong enough to cope hand to hand with a grown-up man. There were a few fishermen's huts close to the battery, and while two of the boats went on board of the vessels, to see if they could be got off, and others were spiking the guns and destroying the carriages, I went with O'Brien to examine them ; they were deserted by the people, as might have been supposed, but there was a great quantity of fish in them, apparently caught that morning. O'Brien pointed to a very large skate—' Murder in Irish ! ' cried he, ' it's the very ghost of my grandmother : we'll have her if it's only for the family likeness. Peter, put your finger into the gills, and drag her down to the boat.' I could not force my finger into the gills, and as the animal appeared quite dead, I hooked my finger into its mouth ; but I made a sad mistake, for the animal was alive, and immediately closed its jaws, nipping my finger to the bone, and holding it so tight that I could not withdraw it, and the pain was too great to allow me to pull it away by main force, and tear my finger, which it held so fast. There I was, caught in a trap, and made a prisoner by



The Skate

a flatfish. Fortunately, I hallooed loud enough to make O'Brien, who was close down to the boats, with a large cod-fish under each arm, turn round and come to my assistance. At first he could not help me, from laughing so much, but at last he forced open the jaw of the fish with his cutlass, and I got my finger out, but very badly torn indeed. I then took off my garter, tied it round the tail of the skate, and dragged it to the boat, which was all ready to shove off. The other boats had found it impossible to get the vessels off without unloading—so, in pursuance of the captain's orders, they were set on fire, and before we lost sight of them, had burnt down to the water's edge. My finger was very bad for three weeks, and the officers laughed at me very much, saying that I narrowly escaped being made a prisoner of by an 'old maid.'

We continued our cruise along the coast, until we had ran down into the Bay of Arcason, where we captured two or three vessels, and obliged many more to run on shore. And here we had an instance showing how very important it is that a captain of a man-of-war should be a good sailor, and have his ship in such discipline as to be strictly obeyed by his ship's company. I heard the officers unanimously assert, after the danger was over, that nothing but the presence of mind which was shown by Captain Savage could have saved the ship and her crew. We had chased a convoy of vessels to the bottom of the bay : the wind was very fresh when we hauled off, after running them

on shore, and the surf on the beach even at that time was so great, that they were certain to go to pieces before they could be got afloat again. We were obliged to double-reef the topsails as soon as we hauled to the wind, and the weather looked very threatening. In an hour afterwards, the whole sky was covered with one black cloud, which sank so low, as nearly to touch our mast-heads, and a tremendous sea, which appeared to have risen up almost by magic, rolled in upon us, setting the vessel on a dead lee-shore. As the night closed in, it blew a dreadful gale, and the ship was nearly buried with the press of canvas which she was obliged to carry : for had we sea-room, we should have been lying-to under storm staysails ; but we were forced to carry on at all risks, that we might claw off shore. The sea broke over as we lay in the trough, deluging us with water from the forecastle, aft, to the binnacles ; and very often, as the ship descended with a plunge, it was with such force that I really thought she would divide in half with the violence of the shock. Double breechings were rove on the guns, and they were further secured with tackles, and strong cleats nailed behind the trunnions, for we heeled over so much when we lurched, that the guns were wholly supported by the breechings and tackles, and had one of them broken loose, it must have burst right through the lee side of the ship, and she must have foundered. The captain, first lieutenant, and most of the officers, remained on deck during the whole of the night ; and really,

what with the howling of the wind, the violence of the rain, the washing of the water about the decks, the working of the chain-pumps, and the creaking and groaning of the timbers, I thought that we must inevitably have been lost ; and I said my prayers at least a dozen times during the night, for I felt it impossible to go to bed. I had often wished, out of curiosity, that I might be in a gale of wind, but I little thought it was to have been a scene of this description, or anything half so dreadful. What made it more appalling was, that we were on a lee-shore, and the consultations of the captain and officers, and the eagerness with which they looked out for daylight, told us that we had other dangers to encounter besides the storm. At last the morning broke, and the look-out man upon the gangway called out, ‘ Land on the lee beam ! ’ I perceived the master dash his feet against the hammock rails, as if with vexation, and walk away without saying a word, and looking very grave.

‘ Up, there, Mr. Wilson,’ said the captain to the second lieutenant, ‘ and see how far the land trends forward, and whether you can distinguish the point.’ The second lieutenant went up the main-rigging, and pointed with his hand to about two points before the beam.

‘ Do you see two hillocks inland ? ’

‘ Yes, sir,’ replied the second lieutenant.

‘ Then it is so,’ observed the captain to the master, ‘ and if we weather it we shall have more sea-room. Keep her full, and let her go through the water ; do you hear, quarter-master ? ’

‘Aye, aye, sir.’

‘Thus, and no nearer, my man. Ease her with a spoke or two when she sends ; but be careful, or she’ll take the wheel out of your hands.’

It really was a very awful sight. When the ship was in the trough of the sea, you could distinguish nothing but a waste of tumultuous water ; but when she was borne up on the summit of the enormous waves, you then looked down, as it were, upon a low, sandy coast, close to you, and covered with foam and breakers. ‘She behaves nobly,’ observed the captain, stepping aft to the binnacle, and looking at the compass ; ‘if the wind does not baffle us, we shall weather.’ The captain had scarcely time to make the observation, when the sails shivered and flapped like thunder. ‘Up with the helm ; what are you about, quarter-master ?’

‘The wind has headed us, sir,’ replied the quarter-master, coolly.

The captain and master remained at the binnacle watching the compass, and when the sails were again full, she had broken off two points, and the point of land was only a little on the lee bow.

‘We must wear her round, Mr. Falcon. Hands, wear ship—ready, oh, ready.’

‘She has come up again,’ cried the master, who was at the binnacle.

‘Hold fast there a minute. How’s her head now ?’

‘N.N.E., as she was before she broke off, sir.’

‘Pipe belay,’ said the captain. ‘Falcon,’ continued he, ‘if she breaks off again we may have no room to wear ; indeed there is so little room now, that I must run the risk. Which cable was ranged last night—the best bower ?’

‘Yes, sir.’

‘Jump down, then, and see it double-bitted and stoppered at thirty fathoms. See it well done—our lives may depend upon it.’

The ship continued to hold her course good ! and we were within half a mile of the point, and fully expected to weather it, when again the wet and heavy sails flapped in the wind, and the ship broke off two points as before. The officers and seamen were aghast, for the ship’s head was right on to the breakers. ‘Luff now, all you can, quarter-master,’ cried the captain. ‘Send the men aft directly. My lads, there is no time for words—I am going to *club-haul* the ship, for there is no room to wear. The only chance you have of safety, is to be cool, watch my eye, and execute my orders with precision. Away to your stations for tacking ship. Hands by the best bower anchor. Mr. Wilson, attend below with the carpenter and his mates, ready to cut away the cable at the moment that I give the order. Silence, there, fore and aft. Quarter-master, keep her full again for stays. Mind you ease the helm down when I tell you.’ About a minute passed before the captain gave any further orders. The ship had closed-to within a quarter of a mile of the beach, and the waves curled and topped around us, bearing us down upon the shore, which

presented one continued surface of foam, extending to within half a cable's length of our position, at which distance the enormous waves culminated and fell with the report of thunder. The captain waved his hand in silence to the quarter-master at the wheel, and the helm was put down. The ship turned slowly to the wind, pitching and chopping as the sails were spilling. When she had lost her way, the captain gave the order, 'Let go the anchor. We will haul all at once, Mr. Falcon,' said the captain. Not a word was spoken ; the men went to the fore-brace, which had not been manned ; most of them knew, although I did not, that if the ship's head did not go round the other way, we should be on shore, and among the breakers, in half a minute. I thought at the time that the captain had said that he would haul all the yards at once, there appeared to be doubt or dissent on the countenance of Mr. Falcon ; and I was afterwards told that he had not agreed with the captain, but he was too good an officer, and knew that there was no time for discussion, to make any remark ; and the event proved that the captain was right. At last the ship was head to wind, and the captain gave the signal. The yards flew round with such a creaking noise, that I thought the masts had gone over the side, and the next moment the wind had caught the sails, and the ship, which for a moment or two had been on an even keel, careened over to her gunnel with its force. The captain, who stood upon the weather hammock-rails, holding by the main-rigging,

ordered the helm a-midships, looked full at the sails, and then at the cable, which grew broad upon the weather bow, and held the ship from nearing the shore. At last he cried, 'Cut away the cable!' A few strokes of the axes were heard, and then the cable flew out of the hawse-hole in a blaze of fire, from the violence of the friction, and disappeared under a huge wave, which struck us on the chess-tree, and deluged us with water fore and aft. But we were now on the other tack, and the ship regained her way, and we had evidently increased our distance from the land.

'My lads,' said the captain to the ship's company, 'you have behaved well, and I thank you: but I must tell you honestly, that we have more difficulties to get through. We have to weather a point of the bay on this tack. Mr. Falcon, splice the main-brace, and call the watch. How's her head, quarter-master?'

'S.W. by S. Southerly, sir.'

'Very well; let her go through the water'; and the captain, beckoning to the master to follow him, went down into the cabin. As our immediate danger was over, I went down into the berth to see if I could get anything for breakfast, where I found O'Brien and two or three more.

'By the powers, it was as nate a thing as ever I saw done,' observed O'Brien; 'the slightest mistake as to time or management, and at this moment the flatfish would have been dubbing at our ugly carcasses. Peter, you're not fond of flatfish, are you, my boy? We may thank

Heaven and the captain, I can tell you that, my lads ; but now, where's the chart, Robinson ? Hand me down the parallel rules and compasses, Peter—they are in the corner of the shelf. Here we are now, a devilish sight too near this infernal point. Who knows how her head is ? ’

‘ I do, O’Brien : I heard the quarter-master tell the captain S.W. by S. Southerly.’

‘ Let me see,’ continued O’Brien, ‘ variation $2\frac{1}{4}$ —lee way—rather too large an allowance of that, I’m afraid ; but, however, we’ll give her $2\frac{1}{2}$ points ; the Diomedé would blush to make any more, under any circumstances. Here—the compass—now we’ll see ’ ; and O’Brien advanced the parallel rule from the compass to the spot where the ship was placed on the chart. ‘ Bother ! you see it’s as much as she’ll do to weather the other point now, on this tack, and that’s what the captain meant when he told us we had more difficulty. I could have taken my Bible oath that we were clear of everything, if the wind held.’

‘ See what the distance is, O’Brien,’ said Robinson. It was measured, and proved to be thirteen miles. ‘ Only thirteen miles ; and if we do weather, we shall do very well, for the bay is deep beyond. It’s a rocky point, you see, just by way of variety. Well, my lads, I’ve a piece of comfort for you, anyhow. It’s not long that you’ll be kept in suspense, for by one o’clock this day, you’ll either be congratulating each other upon your good luck, or you’ll be past praying for. Come, put up the chart, for

I hate to look at melancholy prospects ; and, steward, see what you can find in the way of comfort.' Some bread and cheese, with the remains of yesterday's boiled pork, were put on the table, with a bottle of rum, procured at the time they 'spliced the main-brace' ; but we were all too anxious to eat much, and one by one returned on deck, to see how the weather was, and if the wind at all favoured us. On deck the superior officers were in conversation with the captain, who had expressed the same fear that O'Brien had in our berth. The men, who knew what they had to expect—for this sort of intelligence is soon communicated through a ship—were assembled in knots, looking very grave, but at the same time, not wanting in confidence. They knew that they could trust to the captain, as far as skill or courage could avail them, and sailors are too sanguine to despair, even at the last moment. As for myself, I felt such admiration for the captain, after what I had witnessed that morning, that, whenever the idea came over me, that in all probability I should be lost in a few hours, I could not help acknowledging how much more serious it was that such a man should be lost to his country. I do not intend to say that it consoled me ; but it certainly made me still more regret the chances with which we were threatened.

Before twelve o'clock, the rocky point which we so much dreaded was in sight, broad on the lee bow ; and if the low, sandy coast appeared terrible, how much more did this, even at a

distance ! the black masses of rock, covered with foam, which each minute dashed up in the air higher than our lower mast-heads. The captain eyed it for some minutes in silence, as if in calculation.

‘ Mr. Falcon,’ said he at last, ‘ we must put the mainsail on her.’

‘ She can never bear it, sir.’

‘ She *must* bear it,’ was the reply. ‘ Send the men aft to the mainsheet. See that careful men attend the buntlines.’

The mainsail was set, and the effect of it upon the ship was tremendous. She careened over so that her lee channels were under the water, and when pressed by a sea, the lee side of the quarter-deck and gangway were afloat. She now reminded me of a goaded and fiery horse, mad with the stimulus applied ; not rising as before, but forcing herself through whole seas, and dividing the waves, which poured in one continual torrent from the fore-castle down upon the decks below. Four men were secured to the wheel—the sailors were obliged to cling, to prevent being washed away—the ropes were thrown in confusion to leeward—the shot rolled out of the lockers, and every eye was fixed aloft, watching the masts, which were expected every moment to go over the side. A heavy sea struck us on the broad-side, and it was some moments before the ship appeared to recover herself ; she reeled, trembled, and stopped her way, as if it had stupefied her. The first lieutenant looked at the captain, as if to say, ‘ This will not do.’ ‘ It is our only

chance,' answered the captain to the appeal. That the ship went faster through the water, and held a better wind, was certain ; but just before we arrived at the point, the gale increased in force. ' If anything starts, we are lost, sir,' observed the first lieutenant again.

' I am perfectly aware of it,' replied the captain, in a calm tone ; ' but, as I said before, and you must now be aware, it is our only chance. The consequence of any carelessness or neglect in the fitting and securing of the rigging, will be felt now ; and this danger, if we escape it, ought to remind us how much we have to answer for if we neglect our duty. The lives of a whole ship's company may be sacrificed by the neglect or incompetence of an officer when in harbour. I will pay you the compliment, Falcon, to say, that I feel convinced that the masts of this ship are as secure as knowledge and attention can make them.'

The first lieutenant thanked the captain for his good opinion, and hoped it would not be the last compliment which he paid him.

' I hope not too : but a few minutes will decide the point.'

The ship was now within two cables' lengths of the rocky point ; some few of the men I observed to clasp their hands, but most of them were silently taking off their jackets, and kicking off their shoes, that they might not lose a chance of escape provided the ship struck.

' 'Twill be touch and go indeed, Falcon,' observed the captain, (for I had clung to the belaying pins, close to them, for the last half-

hour that the mainsail had been set). ‘Come aft, you and I must take the helm. We shall want *nerve* there, and only there, now.’

The captain and first lieutenant went aft, and took the fore-spokes of the wheel, and O’Brien, at a sign made by the captain, laid hold of the spokes behind him. An old quarter-master kept his station at the fourth. The roaring of the seas on the rocks, with the howling of the wind, were dreadful ; but the sight was more dreadful than the noise. For a few moments I shut my eyes, but anxiety forced me to open them again. As near as I could judge, we were not twenty yards from the rocks, at the time that the ship passed abreast of them. We were in the midst of the foam, which boiled around us ; and as the ship was driven nearer to them, and careened with the wave, I thought that our main yard-arm would have touched the rock ; and at this moment a gust of wind came on, which laid the ship on her beam-ends, and checked her progress through the water, while the accumulated noise was deafening. A few moments more the ship dragged on, another wave dashed over her and spent itself upon the rocks, while the spray was dashed back from them, and returned upon the decks. The main rock was within ten yards of her counter, when another gust of wind laid us on our beam-ends, the foresail and mainsail split, and were blown clean out of the bolt-ropes—the ship righted, trembling fore and aft. I looked astern :—the rocks were to windward on our quarter, and we were safe. I thought at the

time, that the ship, relieved of her courses, and again lifting over the waves, was not a bad similitude of the relief felt by us all at that moment : and, like her, we trembled as we panted with the sudden reaction, and felt the removal of the intense anxiety which oppressed our breasts.

The captain resigned the helm, and walked aft to look at the point, which was now broad on the weather quarter. In a minute or two, he desired Mr. Falcon to get new sails up and bend them, and then went below to his cabin. I am sure it was to thank God for our deliverance : I did most fervently, not only then, but when I went to my hammock at night. We were now comparatively safe—in a few hours completely so ; for strange to say, immediately after we had weathered the rocks, the gale abated, and before morning we had a reef out of the topsails. It was my afternoon watch, and perceiving Mr. Chucks on the forecastle, I went forward to him, and asked him what he thought of it.

‘ Thought of it, sir ! ’ replied he : ‘ why I always think bad of it, when the elements won’t allow my whistle to be heard ; and I consider it hardly fair play. I never care if we are left to our own exertions ; but how is it possible for a ship’s company to do their best when they cannot hear the boatswain’s pipe ? However, God be thanked, nevertheless, and make better Christians of us all ! As for that carpenter, he is mad : just before we weathered the point, he told me that it was just the same 27,600 and

odd years ago. I do believe that on his death-bed, (and he was not far from a very hard one yesterday,) he will tell us how he died so many thousand years ago, of the same complaint. And that gunner of ours is a fool. Would you believe it, Mr. Simple, he went crying about the decks, "O my poor guns, what will become of them, if they break loose!" He appeared to consider it of no consequence, if the ship and ship's company were all lost, provided that his guns were safely landed on the beach. "Mr. Dispart," said I, at last, "allow me to observe, in the most delicate way in the world, that you're a d—d old fool." You see, Mr. Simple, it's the duty of an officer to generalize, and be attentive to parts only in consideration of the safety of the whole. I look after my anchors and cables, as I do after the rigging; not that I care for any of them in particular, but because the safety of a ship depends upon her being well found. I might just as well cry because we sacrificed an anchor and cable yesterday morning, to save the ship from going on shore.'

'Very true, Mr. Chucks,' replied I.

'Private feelings,' continued he, 'must always be sacrificed for the public service. As you know, the lower deck was full of water, and all our cabins and chests were afloat; but I did not think then about my shirts, and look at them now, all blowing out in the fore-rigging, without a part'cle of starch left in the collars or the frills. I shall not be able to appear as an officer ought to do for the whole of the cruise.'

As he said this, the cooper, going forward,

passed by him, and jostled him in passing. 'Beg pardon, sir,' said the man, 'but the ship lurched.'

'The ship lurched, did it?' replied the boat-swain, who, I am afraid, was not in the best of humours about his wardrobe. 'And pray, Mr. Cooper, why has heaven granted you two legs, with joints at the knees, except to enable you to counteract the horizontal deviation? Do you suppose they were meant for nothing but to work round a cask with? Hark, sir; did you take me for a post to scrub your pig's hide against? Allow me just to observe, Mr. Cooper—just to insinuate, that when you pass an officer, it is your duty to keep at a respectable distance, and not to soil his clothes with your rusty iron jacket. Do you comprehend me, sir; or will this make you recollect it in future?' The rattan was raised, and descended in a shower of blows, until the cooper made his escape into the head. 'There, take that, you contaminating, stave-dubbing, gimlet-carrying quintessence of a bung-hole! I beg your pardon, Mr. Simple, for interrupting the conversation, but when duty calls, we must obey.'

'Very true, Mr. Chucks. It's now striking seven bells, and I must call the master—so good-bye.'

CHAPTER XVI

News from home—A *fatigue* party employed at Gibraltar—More particulars in the life of Mr. Chucks—A brush with the enemy—A court-martial and a lasting impression.

A FEW days afterwards, a cutter joined us from Plymouth, with orders for the frigate to proceed forthwith to Gibraltar, where we should learn our destination. We were all very glad of this : for we had had quite enough of cruising in the Bay of Biscay ; and, as we understood that we were to be stationed in the Mediterranean, we hoped to exchange gales of wind and severe weather, for fine breezes and a bright sky. The cutter brought out our letters and newspapers. I never felt more happy than I did when I found one put into my hands. It is necessary to be far from home and friends, to feel the real delight of receiving a letter. I went down into the most solitary place in the steerage, that I might enjoy it without interruption. I cried with pleasure before I opened it, but I cried a great deal more with grief, after I had read the contents—for my eldest brother Tom was dead of a typhus fever. Poor Tom ! when I called to mind what tricks he used to play me—how he used to borrow my money and never pay me—and how he used to thrash me and make me obey him, because he was my elder brother—I shed a torrent of tears

at his loss ; and then I reflected how miserable my poor mother must be, and I cried still more.

‘ What’s the matter, spooney ? ’ said O’Brien, coming up to me. ‘ Who has been licking you now ? ’

‘ O nobody,’ replied I ; ‘ but my eldest brother Tom is dead, and I have no other.’

‘ Well, Peter, I dare say that your brother was a very good brother ; but I’ll tell you a secret. When you’ve lived long enough to have a beard to scrape at, you’ll know better than to make a fuss about an elder brother. But you’re a good, innocent boy just now, so I won’t thrash you for it. Come, dry your eyes, Peter, and never mind it. We’ll drink his health and long life to him, after supper, and then never think any more about it.’

I was very melancholy for a few days ; but it was so delightful running down the Portuguese and Spanish coasts, the weather was so warm, and the sea so smooth, that I am afraid I forgot my brother’s death sooner than I ought to have done ; but my spirits were cheered up, and the novelty of the scene prevented me from thinking. Every one, too, was so gay and happy, that I could not well be otherwise. In a fortnight, we anchored in Gibraltar Bay, and the ship was stripped to refit. There was so much duty to be done, that I did not like to go on shore. Indeed, Mr. Falcon had refused some of my messmates, and I thought it better not to ask, although I was very anxious to see a place which was considered so extraordinary. One afternoon, I was looking over the gangway

as the people were at supper, and Mr. Falcon came up to me and said, 'Well, Mr. Simple, what are you thinking of?' I replied, touching my hat, that I was wondering how they had cut out the solid rock into galleries, and that they must be very curious.

'That is to say, that you are very curious to see them. Well, then, since you have been very attentive to your duty, and have not asked to go on shore, I will give you leave to go to-morrow morning and stay till gun-fire.'

I was very much pleased at this, as the officers had a general invitation to dine with the mess, and all who could obtain leave being requested to come, I was enabled to join the party. The first lieutenant had excused himself on the plea of there being so much to attend to on board ; but most of the gun-room officers and some of the midshipmen obtained leave. We walked about the town and fortifications until dinner-time, and then we proceeded to the barracks. The dinner was very good, and we were all very merry ; but after the dessert had been brought in, I slipped away with a young ensign, who took me all over the galleries and explained everything to me, which was a much better way of employing my time than doing as the others did, which the reader will acknowledge. I was at the sally-port before gun-fire—the boat was there, but no officers made their appearance. The gun fired, the drawbridge was hauled up, and I was afraid that I should be blamed ; but the boat was not ordered to shove off, as it was waiting for commissioned officers.

About an hour afterwards, when it was quite dark, the sentry pointed his arms and challenged a person advancing with, 'Who comes there?'—'Naval officer, drunk on a wheelbarrow,' was the reply, in a loud singing voice. Upon which, the sentry recovered his arms, singing in return, 'Pass, naval officer, drunk on a wheelbarrow—and all's well!' and then appeared a soldier in his fatigue dress, wheeling down the third lieutenant in a wheelbarrow, so tipsy that he could not stand or speak. Then the sentry challenged again, and the answer was, 'Another naval officer, drunk on a wheelbarrow'; upon which the sentry replied as before, 'Pass, another naval officer, drunk on a wheelbarrow,—and all's well.' This was my friend O'Brien, almost as bad as the third lieutenant; and so they continued for ten minutes, challenging and passing, until they wheeled down the remainder of the party, with the exception of the second lieutenant, who walked arm in arm with the officer who brought down the order for lowering the drawbridge. I was much shocked, for I considered it very disgraceful; but I afterwards was told, which certainly admitted of some excuse, that the mess were notorious for never permitting any of their guests to leave the table sober. They were all safely put into the boat, and I am glad to say, the first lieutenant was in bed and did not see them: but I could not help acknowledging the truth of an observation made by one of the men as the officers were handed into the boat, 'I say, Bill, if *them* were *we*, what a precious twisting we should get to-morrow at six bells!'

The ship remained in Gibraltar Bay about three weeks, during which time we had refitted the rigging fore and aft, re-stowed and cleaned the hold, and painted outside. She never looked more beautiful than she did when, in obedience to our orders, we made sail to join the admiral. We passed Europa Point with a fair wind, and at sunset we were sixty miles from the rock, yet it was distinctly to be seen, like a blue cloud, but the outline perfectly correct. I mention this, as perhaps my reader would not have believed that it was possible to see land at such a distance. We steered for Cape de Gatte, and we were next day close in shore. I was very much delighted with the Spanish coast, mountain upon mountain, hill upon hill, covered with vines nearly to their summits. We might have gone on shore at some places, for at that time we were friendly with the Spaniards ; but the captain was in too great a hurry to join the admiral. We had very light winds, and a day or two afterwards we were off Valencia, nearly becalmed. I was on the gangway, looking through a telescope at the houses and gardens round the city, when Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, came up to me. ‘Mr. Simple, oblige me with that glass a moment ; I wish to see if a building remains there, which I have some reason to remember.’

‘What, were you ever on shore there ?’

‘Yes, I was, Mr. Simple, and nearly *stranded*, but I got off again without much damage.’

‘How do you mean—were you wrecked then ?’

‘Not my ship, Mr. Simple, but my peace of mind was for some time ; but it’s many years ago, when I was first made boatswain of a corvette ; (during this conversation he was looking through the telescope ;) yes, there it is,’ said he ; ‘I have it in the field. Look, Mr. Simple, do you see a small church, with a spire of glazed tiles, shining like a needle.’

‘Yes, I do.’

‘Well, then, just above it, a little to the right, there is a long white house, with four small windows—below the grove of orange-trees.’

‘I see it,’ replied I ; ‘but what about that house, Mr. Chucks ?’

‘Why, thereby hangs a tale,’ replied he, giving a sigh, which raised and then lowered the frill of his shirt, at least six inches.

‘Why, what is the mystery, Mr. Chucks ?’

‘I’ll tell you, Mr. Simple. With one who lived in that house, I was for the first, and for the last time, in love.’

‘Indeed ! I should like very much to hear the story.’

‘So you shall, Mr. Simple : but I must beg that you will not mention it, as young gentlemen are apt to quiz ; and I think that being quizzed hurts my authority with the men. It is now about sixteen years back—we were then on good terms with the Spaniards, as we are now. I was then little more than thirty years old, and had just received my warrant as boatswain. I was considered a well-looking young man at that time, although lately I have, to a certain degree, got the better of that.’

‘Well, I consider you a remarkably good-looking man now, Mr. Chucks.’

‘Thank you, Mr. Simple ; but nothing improves by age that I know of, except rum. I used to dress very smart, and cut the boatswain when I was on shore : and perhaps I had not lost so much of the polish I had picked up in good society. One evening, I was walking in the Plaza, when I saw a female ahead, who appeared to be the prettiest moulded little vessel that I ever cast my eyes on. I followed in her wake, and examined her ; such a clean run I never beheld—so neat, too, in all her rigging—everything so nicely stowed under hatches. And then, she sailed along in such a style, at one moment lifting so lightly, just like a frigate, with her topsails on the caps, that can’t help going along. At another time, as she turned a corner sharp up in the wind—wake as straight as an arrow—no leeway—I made all sail to sheer alongside of her, and, when under quarter, examined her close. Never saw such a fine swell in the counter, and all so trim—no ropes towing overboard. Well, Mr. Simple, I said to myself, “D—n it, if her figure-head and bows be finished off by the same builder, she’s perfect.” So I shot ahead, and yawed a little—caught a peep at her through her veil, and saw two black eyes—as bright as beads, and as large as damsons. I saw quite enough, and not wishing to frighten her, I dropped astern. Shortly afterwards she altered her course, steering for that white house. Just as she was abreast of it, and I playing about her weather

quarter, the priests came by in procession, taking the *host* to somebody who was dying. My little frigate lowered her top-gallant sails out of respect, as other nations used to do, and ought now, and be d—d to them, whenever they pass the flag of old England——’

‘How do you mean?’ inquired I.

‘I mean that she spread her white handkerchief, which fluttered in her hand as she went along, and knelt down upon it on one knee. I did the same, because I was obliged to heave-to to keep my station, and I thought, that if she saw me, it would please her. When she got up, I was on my legs also; but in my hurry, I had not chosen a very clean place, and I found out, when I got up again, that my white jean trowsers were in a shocking mess. The young lady turned round, and seeing my misfortune, laughed, and then went into the white house, while I stood there like a fool, first looking at the door of the house, and then at my trowsers. However, I thought that I might make it the means of being acquainted with her, so I went to the door and knocked. An old gentleman in a large cloak, who was her father, came out; I pointed to my trowsers, and requested him in Spanish to allow me a little water to clean them. The daughter then came from within, and told her father how the accident had happened. The old gentleman was surprised that an English officer was so good a Christian, and appeared to be pleased. He asked me very politely to come in, and sent an old woman for some water. I observed that he was smoking

a bit of paper, and having very fortunately about a couple of dozen of real Havannahs in my pocket, (for I never smoke anything else, Mr. Simple, it being my opinion that no gentleman can,) I took them out, and begged his acceptance of them. His eyes glistened at the sight of them, but he refused to take more than one ; however, I insisted upon his taking the whole bundle, telling him that I had plenty more on board, reserving one for myself, that I might smoke it with him. He then requested me to sit down, and the old woman brought some sour wine, which I declared was very good, although it made me quite ill afterwards. He inquired of me whether I was a good Christian. I replied that I was. I knew that he meant a Catholic, for they call us heretics, Mr. Simple. The daughter then came in without her veil, and she was perfection : but I did not look at her, or pay her any attention after the first salutation, I was so afraid of making the old gentleman suspicious. He then asked what I was—what sort of officer—was I captain ? I replied that I was not. Was I 'tenente ? which means lieutenant ; I answered that I was not, again, but with an air of contempt, as if I was something better. What was I then ? I did not know the Spanish for boat-swain, and, to tell the truth, I was ashamed of my condition. I knew that there was an officer in Spain called corregidor, which means a corrector in English, or one who punishes. Now I thought that quite near enough for my purpose, and I replied that I was the corregidor.

Now, Mr. Simple, a corregidor in Spain is a person of rank and consequence, so they imagined that I must be the same, and they appeared to be pleased. The young lady then inquired if I was of good family—whether I was a gentleman or not. I replied that I hoped so. I remained with them for half-an-hour more, when my segar was finished ; I then rose, and thanking the old gentleman for his civility, begged that I might be allowed to bring him a few more segars, and took my leave. The daughter opened the street door, and I could not refrain from taking her hand and kissing it——’

‘Where’s Mr. Chucks? call the boatswain there forward,’ hallooed out the lieutenant.

‘Here I am, sir,’ replied Mr. Chucks, hastening aft, and leaving me and his story.

‘The captain of the maintop reports the breast backstay much chafed in the serving. Go up and examine it,’ said the first lieutenant.

‘Yes, sir,’ replied the boatswain, who immediately went up the rigging.

‘And, Mr. Simple, attend to the men scraping the spots off the quarter-deck.’

‘Yes, sir,’ replied I ; and thus our conversation was broken up.

The weather changed that night, and we had a succession of rain and baffling winds for six or seven days, during which I had no opportunity of hearing the remainder of the boatswain’s history. We joined the fleet off Toulon, closed the admiral’s ship, and the captain went on board to pay his respects. When he re-

turned, we found out, through the first lieutenant, that we were to remain with the fleet until the arrival of another frigate, expected in about a fortnight, and then the admiral had promised that we should have a cruise. The second day after we had joined, we were ordered to form part of the in-shore squadron, consisting of two line-of-battle ships and four frigates. The French fleet used to come out and manœuvre within range of their batteries ; or, if they proceeded further from the shore, they took good care that they had a leading wind to return again into port. We had been in-shore about a week, every day running close in, and counting the French fleet in the harbour, to see that they were all safe, and reporting it to the admiral by signal, when one fine morning, the whole of the French vessels were perceived to hoist their topsails, and in less than an hour they were under weigh, and came out of the harbour. We were always prepared for action, night and day, and, indeed, often exchanged a shot or two with the batteries when we reconnoitred ; the in-shore squadron could not, of course, cope with the whole French fleet, and our own was about twelve miles in the offing, but the captain of the line-of-battle ships, who commanded us, hove-to as if in defiance, hoping to entice them further out. This was not very easy to do, as the French knew that a shift of wind might put it out of their power to refuse an action, which was what they would avoid, and what we were so anxious to bring about. I say we, speaking of the English, not of my-

self, for, to tell the truth, I was not so very anxious. I was not exactly afraid, but I had an unpleasant sensation at the noise of a cannon-ball, which I had not as yet got over. However, four of the French frigates made sail towards us, and hove-to, when within four miles, three or four line-of-battle ships following them, as if to support them. Our captain made signal for permission to close the enemy, which was granted, with our pennants, and those of another frigate. We immediately made all sail, beat to quarters, put out the fires, and opened the magazines. The French line-of-battle ships perceiving that only two of our frigates were sent against their four, hove-to at about the same distance from their frigates, as our line-of-battle ships and other frigates were from us. In the mean-time our main fleet continued to work in-shore under a press of sail, and the French main fleet also gradually approached the detached ships. The whole scene reminded me of the tournaments I had read of ; it was a challenge in the lists, only that the enemy were two to one, a fair acknowledgment on their parts of our superiority. In about an hour we closed so near, that the French frigates made sail and commenced firing. We reserved our fire until within a quarter of a mile, when we poured our broadside into the headmost frigate, exchanging with her on opposite tacks. The Sea-horse, who followed, also gave her a broadside. In this way we exchanged broadsides with the whole four, and we had the best of it, for they could

not load so fast as we could. We were both ready again for the frigates as they passed us, but they were not ready with their broadside for the Sea-horse, who followed us very closely, so that they had two broadsides each, and we had only four in the Diomedé, the Sea-horse not having one. Our rigging was cut up a great deal, and we had six or seven men wounded, but none killed. The French frigates suffered more, and their admiral perceiving that they were cut up a good deal, made a signal of recall. In the mean-time we had both tacked, and were ranging up on the weather quarter of the sternmost frigate : the line-of-battle ships perceiving this, ran down with the wind, two points free, to support their frigates, and our in-shore squadron made all sail to support us, nearly laying up for where we were. But the wind was what is called at sea a soldier's wind, that is, blowing so that the ships could lie either way, so as to run out or into the harbour, and the French frigates, in obedience to their orders, made sail for their fleet in-shore, the line-of-battle ships coming out to support them. But our captain would not give it up, although we all continued to near the French line-of-battle ships every minute—we ran in with the frigates, exchanging broadsides with them as fast as we could. One of them lost her fore-topmast, and dropped astern, and we hoped to cut her off, but the others shortened sail to support her. This continued for about twenty minutes, when the French line-of-battle ships were not more than a mile from us, and our

own commodore had made the signal of our recall, for he thought that we should be overpowered and taken. But the Sea-horse, who saw the recall up, did not repeat it, and our captain was determined not to see it, and ordered the signalman not to look that way. The action continued, two of the French frigates were cut to pieces, and complete wrecks, when the French line-of-battle ships commenced firing. It was then high time to be off. We each of us poured in another broadside, and then wore round for our own squadron, which were about four miles off, and rather to leeward, standing in to our assistance. As we wore round, our main-topmast, which had been badly wounded, fell over the side, and the French perceiving this, made all sail, with the hope of capturing us ; but the Sea-horse remained with us, and we threw up in the wind, and raked them until they were within two cables' lengths of us. Then we stood on for our own ships. At last one of the line-of-battle ships, which sailed as well as the frigates, came abreast of us, and poured in a broadside, which brought everything about our ears, and I thought we must be taken : but on the contrary, although we lost several men, the captain said to the first lieutenant, ' Now, if they only wait a little longer, they are nabbed, as sure as fate.' Just at this moment, our own line-of-battle ships opened their fire, and then the tables were turned. The French tacked, and stood in as fast as they could, followed by the in-shore squadron, with the exception of our ship, which

was too much crippled to chase them. One of their frigates had taken in tow the other, who had lost her topmast, and our squadron came up with her very fast. The English fleet were also within three miles, standing in, and the French fleet standing out, to the assistance of the other ships which had been engaged. I thought, and so did everybody, that there would be a general action, but we were disappointed ; the frigate which towed the other, finding that she could not escape, cast her off, and left her to her fate, which was to haul down her colours to the commodore of the in-shore squadron. The chase was continued until the whole of the French vessels were close under their batteries, and then our fleet returned to its station with the prize, which proved to be the *Narcisse*, of thirty-six guns, Captain Le Pelleteon. Our captain obtained a great deal of credit for his gallant behaviour. We had three men killed, and Robinson, the midshipman, and ten men wounded, some of them severely. I think this action cured me of my fear of a cannon-ball, for during the few days we remained with the fleet, we often were fired at when we reconnoitred, but I did not care anything for them. About the time she was expected, the frigate joined, and we had permission to part company. But before I proceed with the history of our cruise, I shall mention the circumstances attending a court-martial, which took place during the time that we were with the fleet, our captain having been recalled from the in-shore squadron to sit as one of the members.

I was the midshipman appointed to the captain's gig, and remained on board of the admiral's ship during the whole of the time that the court was sitting. Two seamen, one an Englishman and the other a Frenchman, were tried for desertion from one of our frigates. They had left their ship about three months, when the frigate captured a French privateer, and found them on board as part of her crew. For the Englishman, of course, there was no defence ; he merited the punishment of death, to which he was immediately sentenced. There may be some excuse for desertion, when we consider that the seamen are taken into the service by force, but there could be none for fighting against his country. But the case of the Frenchman was different. He was born and bred in France, had been one of the crew of the French gun-boats at Cadiz, where he had been made a prisoner by the Spaniards, and expecting his throat to be cut every day, had contrived to escape on board of the frigate lying in the harbour, and entered into our service, I really believe to save his life. He was nearly two years in the frigate before he could find an opportunity of deserting from her, and returning to France, where he joined the French privateer. During the time that he was in the frigate, he bore an excellent character. The greatest point against him was, that on his arrival at Gibraltar, he had been offered and had received his bounty. When the Englishman was asked what he had to say in his defence, he replied that he had been pressed out

of an American ship, that he was an American born, and that he had never taken the bounty. But this was not true. The defence of the Frenchman was considered so very good for a person in his station of life, that I obtained a copy of it, which ran as follows :

‘ Mr. President, and Officers of the Honourable Court :—It is with the greatest humility that I venture to address you. I shall be very brief, nor shall I attempt to disprove the charges which have been made against me, but confine myself to a few facts, the consideration of which will, I trust, operate upon your feelings in mitigation of the punishment to which I may be sentenced for my fault—a fault which proceeded, not from any evil motive, but from an ardent love for my country. I am by birth a Frenchman ; my life has been spent in the service of France, until a few months after the revolution of Spain, when I, together with those who composed the French squadron at Cadiz, was made a prisoner. The hardships and cruel usage which I endured became insupportable. I effected my escape, and after wandering about the town for two or three days, in hourly expectation of being assassinated, the fate of too many of my unfortunate countrymen ; desperate from famine, and perceiving no other chance of escaping from the town, I was reduced to the necessity of offering myself as a volunteer on board of an English frigate. I dared not, as I ought to have done, acknowledge myself to have been a prisoner, from the dread of being delivered up to the

Spaniards. During the period that I served on board of your frigate, I confidently rely upon the captain and the officers for my character.

‘The love of our country, although dormant for a time, will ultimately be roused, and peculiar circumstances occurred which rendered the feeling irresistible. I returned to my duty, and for having so done, am I to be debarred from again returning to that country so dear to me—from again beholding my aged parents, who bless me in my absence—from again embracing my brothers and sisters—to end my days upon a scaffold ; not for the crime which I did commit in entering into your service, but for an act of duty and repentance—that of returning to my own ? Allow me to observe, that the charge against me is not for entering your service, but for having deserted from it. For the former, not even my misery can be brought forward but in extenuation ; for the latter I have a proud consciousness, which will, I trust, be my support in my extremity.

‘Gentlemen, I earnestly entreat you to consider my situation, and I am sure that your generous hearts will pity me. Let that love of your country, which now animates your breasts, and induces you to risk your lives and your all, now plead for me. Already has British humanity saved thousands of my countrymen from the rage of the Spaniards : let that same humanity be extended now, and induce my judges to add one more to the list of those who, although our nations are at war, if they are endowed with feeling, can have but one senti-

ment towards their generous enemy—a sentiment overpowering all other, that of a deep-felt gratitude.’¹

Whatever may have been the effect of the address upon the court individually, it appeared at the time to have none upon them as a body. Both the men were condemned to death, and the day after the morrow was fixed for their execution. I watched the two prisoners as they went down the side, to be conducted on board of their own ship. The Englishman threw himself down in the stern sheets of the boat, every minor consideration apparently swallowed up in the thought of his approaching end; but the Frenchman, before he sat down, observing that the seat was a little dirty, took out his silk handkerchief, and spread it on the seat, that he might not soil his nankeen trowsers.

I was ordered to attend the punishment on the day appointed. The sun shone so brightly, and the sky was so clear, and the wind so gentle and mild, that it appeared hardly possible that it was to be a day of such awe and misery to the two poor men, or of such melancholy to the fleet in general. I pulled up my boat with the others belonging to the ships of the fleet, in obedience to the orders of the officer superintending, close to the fore-chains of the ship. In about half-an-hour afterwards, the prisoners made their appearance on the scaffold, the caps were pulled over their eyes, and the gun fired underneath them. When the smoke rolled away, the Englishman was swinging at the

¹ This is fact—AUTHOR.

yard-arm, but the Frenchman was not ; he had made a spring when the gun fired, hoping to break his neck at once, and put an end to his misery ; but he fell on the edge of the scaffold, where he lay. We thought that his rope had given way, and it appeared that he did the same, for he made an inquiry, but they returned him no answer. He was kept on the scaffold during the whole hour that the Englishman remained suspended ; his cap had been removed, and he looked occasionally at his fellow-sufferer. When the body was lowered down, he considered that his time was come, and attempted to leap overboard. He was restrained and led aft, where his reprieve was read to him, and his arms were unbound. But the effect of the shock was too much for his mind ; he fell down in a swoon, and when he recovered, his senses had left him, and I heard that he never recovered them, but was sent home to be confined as a maniac. I thought, and the result proved, that it was carried too far. It is not the custom, when a man is reprieved, to tell him so, until after he is on the scaffold, with the intention that his awful situation at the time may make a lasting impression upon him during the remainder of his life ; but, as a foreigner, he was not aware of our customs, and the hour of intense feeling which he underwent was too much for his reason. I must say, that this circumstance was always a source of deep regret in the whole fleet, and that his being a Frenchman, instead of an Englishman, increased the feeling of commiseration.

CHAPTER XVII

Mr. Chucks' opinion on proper names—He finishes his Spanish talk—March of intellect among the Warrant Officers.

WE were all delighted when our signal was hoisted to 'part company,' as we anticipated plenty of prize-money under such an enterprising captain. We steered for the French coast, near to its junction with Spain, the captain having orders to intercept any convoys sent to supply the French army with stores and provisions.

The day after we parted company with the fleet, Mr. Chucks finished his story.

'Where was I, Mr. Simple, when I left off?' said he, as he took a seat upon the long eighteen.

'You had just left the house after having told them that you were a corregidor, and had kissed the lady's hand.'

'Very true. Well, Mr. Simple, I did not call there for two or three days afterwards; I did not like to go too soon, especially as I saw the young lady every day in the Plaza. She would not speak to me, but, to make use of their expression, she "gave me her eyes," and sometimes a sweet smile. I recollect I was busy looking at her one day, that I tripped over my sword, and nearly fell on my nose, at which she burst out a laughing.'

‘Your sword, Mr. Chucks? I thought boatswains never wore swords.’

‘Mr. Simple, a boatswain is an officer, and is entitled to a sword as well as the captain, although we have been laughed out of it by a set of midshipman monkeys. I always wore my sword at that time; but now-a-days, a boatswain is counted as nobody, unless there is hard work to do, and then it’s Mr. Chucks this, and Mr. Chucks that. But I’ll explain to you how it is, Mr. Simple, that we boatswains have lost so much of consequence and dignity. The first lieutenants are made to do the boatswain’s duty now-a-days, and if they could only wind the call, they might scratch the boatswain’s name off half the ships’ books in his majesty’s service. But to go on with my yarn. On the fourth day, I called with my handkerchief full of segars for the father, but he was at siesta, as they called it. The old serving-woman would not let me in at first; but I shoved a dollar between her skinny old fingers, and that altered her note. She put her old head out, and looked round to see if there was anybody in the street to watch us, and then she let me in and shut the door. I walked into the room, and found myself alone with Seraphina.’

‘Seraphina!—what a fine name!’

‘No name can be too fine for a pretty girl or a good frigate, Mr. Simple; for my part, I’m very fond of these hard names. Your Bess, and Poll, and Sue, do very well for the Point, or Castle Rag; but in my opinion they de-

grade a lady. Don't you observe, Mr. Simple, that all our gun-brigs, a sort of vessel that will certainly d—n the inventor to all eternity, have nothing but low, common names, such as Pincher, Thrasher, Boxer, Badger, and all that sort, which are quite good enough for them ; whereas all our dashing, saucy frigates have names as long as the maintop bowling, and hard enough to break your jaw—such as Mel-pomeny, Terpsichory, Arethusy, Bacchanty—fine flourishers, as long as their pennants which dip alongside in a calm.'

'Very true,' replied I ; 'but do you think, then, it is the same with family names ?'

'Most certainly, Mr. Simple. When I was in good society, I rarely fell in with such names as Potts, or Bell, or Smith, or Hodges ; it was always Mr. Fortescue, or Mr. Fitzgerald, or Mr. Fitzherbert—seldom bowed, sir, to anything under *three* syllables.'

'Then I presume, Mr. Chucks, you are not fond of your own name ?'

'There you touch me, Mr. Simple ; but it is quite good enough for a boatswain,' replied Mr. Chucks, with a sigh. 'I certainly did very wrong to impose upon people as I did, but I've been severely punished for it—it has made me discontented and unhappy ever since. Dearly have I paid for my spree ; for there's nothing so miserable as to have ideas above your station in life, Mr. Simple. But I must make sail again. I was three hours with Seraphina before her father came home, and during that time I never was quietly at an anchor for above

a minute. I was on my knees, vowing and swearing, kissing her feet and kissing her hand, till at last I got to her lips, working my way up as regularly as one who gets in at the hawse-hole and crawls aft to the cabin windows. She was very kind, and she smiled, and sighed, and pushed me off, and squeezed my hand, and was angry—frowning till I was in despair, and then making me happy again with her melting dark eyes beaming kindly, till at last she said that she would try to love me, and asked me whether I would marry her and live in Spain. I replied that I would ; and, indeed, I felt as if I could, only at the time the thought occurred to me where the rhino was to come from, for I could not live, as her father did, upon a paper segar and a piece of melon per day. At all events, as far as words went, it was a settled thing. When her father came home, the old servant told him that I had just at that moment arrived, and that his daughter was in her own room ; so she was, for she ran away as soon as she heard her father knock. I made my bow to the old gentleman, and gave him the segars. He was serious at first, but the sight of them put him into good-humour, and in a few minutes Donna Seraphina (they call a lady a Donna in Spain) came in, saluting me ceremoniously, as if we had not been kissing for the hour together. I did not remain long, as it was getting late, so I took a glass of the old gentleman's sour wine, and walked off, with a request from him to call again, the young lady paying me little or no attention

during the time that I remained, or at my departure.'

'Well, Mr. Chucks,' observed I, 'it appears to me, that she was a very deceitful young person.'

'So she was, Mr. Simple ; but a man in love can't see, and I'll tell you why. If he wins the lady, he is as much in love with himself as with her, because he is so proud of his conquest. That was my case. If I had had my eyes, I might have seen, that she who could cheat her old father for a mere stranger, would certainly deceive him in his turn. But if love makes a man blind, vanity, Mr. Simple, makes him blinder. In short, I was an ass.'

'Never mind, Mr. Chucks, there was a good excuse for it.'

'Well, Mr. Simple, I met her again and again, until I was madly in love, and the father appeared to be aware of what was going on, and to have no objection. However, he sent for a priest to talk with me, and I again said that I was a good Catholic. I told him that I was in love with the young lady, and would marry her. The father made no objection on my promising to remain in Spain, for he would not part with his only daughter. And there again I was guilty of deceit, first, in making a promise I did not intend to keep, and then in pretending that I was a Catholic. Honesty is the best policy, Mr. Simple, in the long run, you may depend upon it.'

'So my father has always told me, and I have believed him,' replied I.

‘ Well, sir, I am ashamed to say that I did worse ; for the priest, after the thing was settled, asked me whether I had confessed lately. I knew what he meant, and answered that I had not. He motioned me down on my knees ; but, as I could not speak Spanish enough for that, I mumbled-jumbled something or another, half Spanish and half English, and ended with putting four dollars in his hand for *carita*, which means charity. He was satisfied at the end of my confession, whatever he might have been at the beginning, and gave me absolution, although he could not have understood what my crimes were ; but four dollars, Mr. Simple, will pay for a deal of crime in that country. And now, sir, comes the winding-up of this business. Seraphina told me that she was going to the opera with some of her relations, and asked me if I would be there ; that the captain of the frigate, and all the other officers were going, and that she wished me to go with her. You see, Mr. Simple, although Seraphina’s father was so poor that a mouse would have starved in his house, still he was of good family, and connected with those who were much better off. He was a Don himself, and had fourteen or fifteen long names, which I forget now. I refused to go with her, as I knew that the service would not permit a boatswain to sit in an opera box, when the captain and first lieutenant were there. I told her that I had promised to go on board and look after the men while the captain went on shore ; thus, as you’ll see, Mr. Simple, making myself a man

of consequence, only to be more mortified in the end. After she had gone to the opera, I was very uncomfortable : I was afraid that the captain would see her, and take a fancy to her. I walked up and down, outside, until I was so full of love and jealousy, that I determined to go into the pit, and see what she was about. I soon discovered her in a box, with some other ladies, and with them were my captain and first lieutenant. The captain, who spoke the language well, was leaning over her, talking and laughing, and she was smiling at what he said. I resolved to leave immediately, lest she should see me, and discover that I had told her a falsehood ; but they appeared so intimate that I became so jealous I could not quit the theatre. At last she perceived me, and beckoned her hand ; I looked very angry, and left the theatre cursing like a madman. It appeared that she pointed me out to the captain, and asked him who I was ; he told her my real situation on board, and spoke of me with contempt. She asked whether I was not a man of family ; at this the captain and first lieutenant both burst out laughing, and said that I was a common sailor who had been promoted to a higher rank for good behaviour—not exactly an officer, and anything but a gentleman. In short, Mr. Simple, I was *blown upon* ; and although the captain said more than was correct, as I learnt afterwards through the officers, still I deserved it. Determined to know the worst, I remained outside till the opera was over, when I saw her come out, the captain and

first lieutenant walking with the party—so that I could not speak with her. I walked to a posada, (that's an inn,) and drank seven bottles of rosolio to keep myself quiet ; then I went on board, and the second lieutenant, who was commanding officer, put me under arrest for being intoxicated. It was a week before I was released ; and you can't imagine what I suffered, Mr. Simple. At last, I obtained leave to go on shore, and I went to the house to decide my fate. The old woman opened the door, and then calling me a thief, slammed it in my face ; as I retreated, Donna Seraphina came to the window, and, waving her hand with a contemptuous look, said, " Go, and God be with you, Mr. Gentleman." I returned on board in such a rage, and if I could have persuaded the gunner to have given me a ball cartridge, I should have shot myself through the head. What made the matter worse, I was laughed at by everybody in the ship, for the captain and first lieutenant had made the story public.'

' Well, Mr. Chucks,' replied I, ' I cannot help being sorry for you, although you certainly deserved to be punished for your dishonesty. Was that the end of the affair ? '

' As far as I was concerned, it was, Mr. Simple ; but not as respected others. The captain took my place, but without the knowledge of the father. After all, they neither had great reason to rejoice at the exchange.'

' How so, Mr. Chucks—what do you mean ? '

' Why, Mr. Simple, the captain did not make

an honest woman of her, as I would have done ; and the father discovered what was going on, and one night the captain was brought on board run through the body. We sailed immediately for Gibraltar, and it was a long while before he got round again : and then he had another misfortune !’

‘ What was that ? ’

‘ Why, he lost his boatswain, Mr. Simple ; for I could not bear the sight of him—and then he lost, (as you must know, not from your own knowledge, but from that of others,) a boatswain who knows his duty.’

‘ Every one says so, Mr. Chucks. I’m sure that our captain would be very sorry to part with you.’

‘ I trust that every captain has been, with whom I’ve sailed, Mr. Simple. But that was not all he lost, Mr. Simple ; for the next cruise he lost his masts ; and the loss of his masts occasioned the loss of his ship, since which he has never been trusted with another, but is laid on the shelf. Now he never carried away a spar of any consequence during the whole time that I was with him. A mast itself is nothing, Mr. Simple—only a piece of wood—but fit your rigging properly, and then a mast is as strong as a rock. Only ask Mr. Faulkner, and he’ll tell you the same ; and I never met an officer who knew better how to support a mast.’

‘ Did you ever hear any more of the young lady ? ’

‘ Yes, about a year afterwards, I returned there in another ship. She had been shut up

in a convent, and forced to take the veil. Oh, Mr. Simple ! if you knew how I loved that girl ! I have never been more than polite to a woman since, and shall die a bachelor. You can't think how I was capsized the other day, when I looked at the house ; I have hardly touched beef or pork since, and am in debt two quarts of rum more than my allowance. But, Mr. Simple, I have told you this in confidence, and I trust you are too much of a gentleman to repeat it ; for I cannot bear quizzing from young midshipmen.'

I promised that I would not mention it, and I kept my word ; but circumstances which the reader will learn in the sequel have freed me from the condition. Nobody can quiz him now.

We gained our station off the coast of Perpignan ; and as soon as we made the land, we were most provokingly driven off by a severe gale. I am not about to make any remarks about the gale, for one storm is so like another : but I mention it to account for a conversation which took place, and with which I was very much amused. I was near to the captain when he sent for Mr. Muddle, the carpenter, who had been up to examine the main-topsail yard, which had been reported as sprung.

' Well, Mr. Muddle ? ' said the captain.

' Sprung, sir, most decidedly ; but I think we'll be able to *mitigate* it.'

' Will you be able to secure it for the present, Mr. Muddle ? ' replied the captain rather sharply.

' We'll *mitigate* it, sir, in half-an-hour.'

‘ I wish that you would use common phrases, when you speak to me, Mr. Muddle. I presume, by mitigate, you mean to say that you can secure it. Do you mean so, sir, or do you not ? ’

‘ Yes, sir, that is what I mean, most decidedly. I hope no offence, Captain Savage ; but I did not intend to displease you by my language.’

‘ Very good, Mr. Muddle,’ replied the captain ; ‘ it’s the first time that I have spoken to you on the subject, recollect that it will be the last.’

‘ The first time ! ’ replied the carpenter, who could not forget his philosophy ; ‘ I beg your pardon, Captain Savage—you found just the same fault with me on this quarter-deck 27,672 years ago, and——’

‘ If I did, Mr. Muddle,’ interrupted the captain, very angrily, ‘ depend upon it that at the same time I ordered you to go aloft, and attend to your duty, instead of talking nonsense on the quarter-deck ; and although, as you say, you and I cannot recollect it, if you did not obey that order instantaneously, I also put you in confinement, and obliged you to leave the ship as soon as she returned to port. Do you understand me, sir ? ’

‘ I rather think, sir,’ replied the carpenter, humbly touching his hat, and walking to the main rigging, ‘ that no such thing took place, for I went up immediately, as I do now ; and,’ continued the carpenter, who was incurable, as he ascended the rigging, ‘ as I shall again in another 27,672 years.’

‘That man is incorrigible with his confounded nonsense,’ observed the captain to the first lieutenant. ‘Every mast in the ship would go over the side, provided he could get any one to listen to his ridiculous theory.’

‘He is not a bad carpenter, sir,’ replied the first lieutenant.

‘He is not,’ rejoined the captain ; ‘but there is a time for all things.’

Just at this moment, the boatswain came down the rigging.

‘Well, Mr. Chucks, what do you think of the yard? Must we shift it?’ inquired the captain.

‘At present, Captain Savage,’ replied the boatswain, ‘I consider it to be in a state which may be called precarious, and not at all permanent ; but, with a little human exertion, four fathom of three inch, and half-a-dozen tenpenny nails, it may last, for all I know, until it is time for it to be sprung again.’

‘I do not understand you, Mr. Chucks ; I know no time when a yard ought to be sprung.’

‘I did not refer to our time, sir,’ replied the boatswain, ‘but to the 27,672 years of Mr. Muddle, when——’

‘Go forward immediately, sir, and attend to your duty,’ cried the captain in a very angry voice ; and then he said to the first lieutenant, ‘I believe the warrant officers are going mad. Who ever heard a boatswain use such language —“precarious and not at all permanent?” His stay in the ship will become so, if he does not mind what he is about.’

‘He is a very odd character, sir,’ replied the first lieutenant ; ‘but I have no hesitation in saying that he is the best boatswain in his majesty’s service.’

‘I believe so too,’ replied the captain ; ‘but—well, every one has his faults. Mr. Simple, what are you about, sir ?’

‘I was listening to what you said,’ replied I, touching my hat.

‘I admire your candour, sir,’ replied he, ‘but advise you to discontinue the practice. Walk over to leeward, sir, and attend to your duty.’

When I was on the other side of the deck, I looked round, and saw the captain and first lieutenant both laughing.

CHAPTER XVIII

I go away on service, am wounded and taken prisoner with O'Brien—Diamond cut diamond between the O'Briens—Get into comfortable quarters—My first interview with Celeste.

AND now I have to relate an event, which, young as I was at the time, will be found to have seriously affected me in after-life. How little do we know what to-morrow may bring forth ! We had regained our station, and for some days had been standing off and on the coast, when one morning at daybreak, we found ourselves about four miles from the town of Cette, and a large convoy of vessels coming round a point. We made all sail in chase, and they anchored close in-shore, under a battery, which we did not discover until it opened fire upon us. The shot struck the frigate two or three times, for the water was smooth, and the battery nearly level with it. The captain tacked the ship, and stood out again, until the boats were hoisted out, and all ready to pull on shore and storm the battery. O'Brien, who was the officer commanding the first cutter on service, was in his boat, and I again obtained permission from him to smuggle myself into it.

‘ Now, Peter, let’s see what kind of a fish you’ll bring on board this time,’ said he, after we had shoved off ; ‘ or may be, the fish will not let you off quite so easy.’ The men in the

boat all laughed at this, and I replied, 'that I must be more seriously wounded than I was last time, to be made a prisoner.' We ran on shore, amidst the fire of the gun-boats, who protected the convoy, by which we lost three men, and made for the battery, which we took without opposition, the French artillery-men running out as we ran in. The directions of the captain were very positive, not to remain in the battery a minute after it was taken, but to board the gun-boats, leaving only one of the small boats, with the armourer to spike the guns, for the captain was aware that there were troops stationed along the coast, who might come down upon us, and beat us off. The first lieutenant, who commanded, desired O'Brien to remain with the first cutter, and after the armourer had spiked the guns, as officer of the boat he was to shove off immediately. O'Brien and I remained in the battery with the armourer, the boat's crew being ordered down to the boat, to keep her afloat, and ready to shove off at a moment's warning. We had spiked all the guns but one, when all of a sudden a volley of musketry was poured upon us, which killed the armourer, and wounded me in the leg, above the knee. I fell down by O'Brien, who cried out, 'By the powers ! here they are, and one gun not spiked.' He jumped down, wrenched the hammer from the armourer's hand, and seizing a nail from the bag, in a few moments he had spiked the gun. At this time I heard the tramping of the French soldiers advancing, when O'Brien threw away the



O'Brien Spikes the Gun

hammer, and lifting me upon his shoulders, cried, 'Come along, Peter, my boy,' and made for the boat as fast as he could ; but he was too late ; he had not got half-way to the boat, before he was collared by two French soldiers, and dragged back into the battery. The French troops then advanced, and kept up a smart fire ; our cutter escaped, and joined the other boat, who had captured the gun-boats and convoy with little opposition. Our large boats had carronades mounted in their bows, and soon returned the fire with round and grape, which drove the French troops back into the battery, where they remained, popping at our men under cover, until most of the vessels were taken out : those which they could not man were burnt. In the meantime, O'Brien had been taken into the battery, with me on his back : but as soon as he was there, he laid me gently down, saying, 'Peter, my boy, as long as you were under my charge, I'd carry you through thick and thin ; but now that you are under the charge of these French beggars, why let them carry you. Every man his own bundle, Peter, that's fair play ; so if they think you're worth the carrying, let them bear the weight of ye.'

'And suppose that they do not, O'Brien, will you leave me here ?'

'Will I lave you, Peter ! not if I can help it, my boy ; but they won't leave you, never fear them ; prisoners are so scarce with them, that they would not leave the captain's monkey, if he were taken.'

As soon as our boats were clear of their musketry, the commanding officer of the French troops examined the guns in the battery, with the hope of reaching them, and was very much annoyed to find that every one of them was spiked. 'He'll look sharper than a magpie before he finds a clear touchhole, I expect,' said O'Brien, as he watched the officer. And here I must observe, that O'Brien showed great presence of mind in spiking the last gun ; for, had they had one gun to fire at our boats towing out the prizes, they must have done a great deal of mischief to them, and we should have lost a great many men ; but in so doing, and in the attempt to save me, he sacrificed himself, and was taken prisoner. When the troops ceased firing, the commanding officer came up to O'Brien, and looking at him, said, 'Officer ?' to which O'Brien nodded his head. He then pointed to me—'Officer ?' O'Brien nodded his head again, at which the French troops laughed, as O'Brien told me afterwards, because I was what they called an *enfant*, which means an infant. I was very stiff and faint, and could not walk. The officer who commanded the troops, left a detachment in the battery, and prepared to return to Cette, from whence they came. O'Brien walked, and I was carried on three muskets by six of the French soldiers,—not a very pleasant conveyance at any time, but in my state excessively painful. However, I must say, that they were very kind to me, and put a great coat or something under my wounded leg, for I was in an



Peter and O'Brien made Prisoners

agony, and fainted several times. At last they brought me some water to drink. O how delicious it was ! I have often thought since, when I have been in company, where people fond of good living have smacked their lips at their claret, that if they could only be wounded, and take a cup of water, they would then know what it was to feel a beverage grateful. In about an hour and a half, which appeared to me to be five days at the least, we arrived at the town of Cette, and I was taken up to the house of the officer who commanded the troops, and who had often looked at me as I was carried there from the battery, saying, ‘ *Pauvre enfant !* ’ I was put on a bed, where I again fainted away. When I came to my senses, I found a surgeon had bandaged my leg, and that I had been undressed. O’Brien was standing by me, and I believe that he had been crying, for he thought that I was dead. When I looked him in the face, he said, ‘ Pater, you baste, how you frightened me : bad luck to me if ever I take charge of another youngster. What did you sham dead for ? ’

‘ I am better now, O’Brien,’ replied I : ‘ how much I am indebted to you ! you have been made prisoner in trying to save me.’

‘ I have been made prisoner in doing my duty, in one shape or another. If that fool of an armourer hadn’t held his hammer so tight, after he was dead, and it was of no use to him, I should have been clear enough, and so would you have been ! but, however, all this is nothing at all, Peter ; as far as I can see, the life of

a man consists in getting into scrapes, and getting out of them. By the blessing of God, we've managed the first, and by the blessing of God we'll manage the second also ; so be smart, my honey, and get well, for although a man may escape by running away on two legs, I never heard of a boy who hopped out of a French prison upon one.'

I squeezed the offered hand of O'Brien, and looked round me ; the surgeon stood at one side of the bed, and the officer who commanded the troops at the other. At the head of the bed was a little girl, about twelve years old, who held a cup in her hand, out of which something had been poured down my throat. I looked at her, and she had such pity in her face, which was remarkably handsome, that she appeared to me as an angel, and I turned round as well as I could, that I might look at her alone. She offered me the cup, which I should have refused from any one but her, and I drank a little. Another person then came into the room, and a conversation took place in French.

'I wonder what they mean to do with us,' said I to O'Brien.

'Whist, hold your tongue,' replied he ; and then he leaned over me, and said in a whisper, 'I understand all they say ; don't you recollect, I told you that I learnt the language after I was kilt and buried in the sand, in South America ?' After a little more conversation, the officer and the others retired, leaving nobody but the little girl and O'Brien in the room.

'It's a message from the governor,' said

O'Brien, as soon as they were gone, 'wishing the prisoners to be sent to the gaol in the citadel, to be examined ; and the officer says, (and he's a real gentleman, as far as I can judge,) that you're but a baby, and badly wounded in the bargain, and that it would be a shame not to leave you to die in peace ; so I presume, that I'll part company from you very soon.'

'I hope not, O'Brien,' replied I ; 'if you go to prison, I will go also, for I will not leave you, who are my best friend, to remain with strangers ; I should not be half so happy, although I might have more comforts in my present situation.'

'Pater, my boy, I am glad to see that your heart is in the right place, as I always thought it was, or I wouldn't have taken you under my protection. We'll go together to prison, my jewel, and I'll fish at the bars with a bag and a long string, just by way of recreation, and to pick up a little money to buy you all manner of nice things ; and when you get well, you shall do it yourself, mayhap you'll have better luck, as Peter your namesake had, who was a fisherman before you. There's twice as much room in one of the cells as there is in a midshipman's berth, my boy ; and the prison yards, where you are allowed to walk, will make a dozen quarter-decks, and no need of touching your hat out of respect when you go into it. When a man has been cramped up on board of a man-of-war, where midshipmen are stowed away like pilchards in a cask, he finds himself quite at liberty in a prison, Peter. But some-

how or another, I think we mayn't be parted yet, for I heard the officer, (who appears to be a real gentleman, and worthy to have been an Irishman born,) say to the other, that he'd ask the governor for me to stay with you on parole, until you are well again.' The little girl handed me the lemonade, of which I drank a little, and then I felt very faint again. I laid my head on the pillow, and O'Brien having left off talking, I was soon in a comfortable sleep. In an hour I was awakened by the return of the officer, who was accompanied by the surgeon. The officer addressed O'Brien in French, who shook his head as before.

'Why don't you answer, O'Brien,' said I, 'since you understand him?'

'Peter, recollect that I cannot speak a word of their lingo; then I shall know what they say before us, and they won't mind what they say, supposing I do not understand them.'

'But is that honest, O'Brien?'

'Is it honest you mean? if I had a five pound note in my pocket, and don't choose to show it to every fellow that I meet—is that dishonest?'

'To be sure it's not.'

'And a'n't that what the lawyers call a case in pint?'

'Well,' replied I, 'if you wish it, I shall of course say nothing; but I think that I should tell them, especially as they are so kind to us.'

During this conversation, the officer occasionally spoke to the surgeon, at the same time eyeing us, I thought, very hard. Two other

persons then came into the room ; one of them addressed O'Brien in very bad English, saying, that he was interpreter, and would beg him to answer a few questions. He then inquired the name of our ship, number of guns, and how long we had been cruising. After that, the force of the English fleet, and a great many other questions relative to them ; all of which were put in French by the person who came with him, and the answers translated, and taken down in a book. Some of the questions O'Brien answered correctly, to others he pleaded ignorance ; and to some he asserted what was not true. But I did not blame him for that, as it was his duty not to give information to the enemy. At last they asked my name, and rank, which O'Brien told them. ' Was I noble ? '

' Yes,' replied O'Brien.

' Don't say so, O'Brien,' interrupted I.

' Peter, you know nothing about it ; you are grandson to a lord.'

' I know that, but still I am not noble myself, although descended from him ; therefore pray don't say so.'

' Bother ! Pater, I have said it, and I won't unsay it ; besides, Pater, recollect it's a French question, and in France you would be considered noble. At all events, it can do no harm.'

' I feel too ill to talk, O'Brien ; but I wish you had not said so.'

They then inquired O'Brien's name, which he told them : his rank in the service, and also whether he was noble.

‘ I am an O’Brien,’ replied he ; ‘ and pray what’s the meaning of the O before my name, if I’m not noble ? ’ however, Mr. Interpreter, you may add, that we have dropped our title because it’s not *convanient*.’ The French officer burst out into a loud laugh, which surprised us very much. The interpreter had great difficulty in explaining what O’Brien said ; but as O’Brien told me afterwards, the answer was put down *doubtful*.

They all left the room except the officer, who then, to our astonishment, addressed us in good English, ‘ Gentlemen, I have obtained permission from the governor for you to remain in my house, until Mr. Simple is recovered. Mr. O’Brien, it is necessary that I should receive your parole of honour, that you will not attempt to escape. Are you willing to give it ? ’

O’Brien was quite amazed ; ‘ Murder an’ Irish,’ cried he ; ‘ so you speak English, colonel. It was not very genteel of you not to say so, considering how we’ve been talking our little secrets together.’

‘ Certainly, Mr. O’Brien, not more necessary,’ replied the officer, smiling, ‘ than for you to tell me that you understood French.’

‘ O bother ! ’ cried O’Brien, ‘ how nicely I’m caught in my own trap ! You’re an Irishman, sure ? ’

‘ I’m of Irish descent,’ replied the officer, ‘ and my name, as well as yours, is O’Brien. I was brought up in this country, not being permitted to serve my own, and retain the religion of my forefathers. I may now be con-

sidered as a Frenchman, retaining nothing of my original country, except the language, which my mother taught me, and a warm feeling towards the English wherever I meet them. But to the question, Mr. O'Brien, will you give your parole ? '

'The word of an Irishman, and the hand to boot,' replied O'Brien, shaking the colonel by the hand ; 'and you are more than doubly sure, for I'll never go away and leave little Peter here ; and as for carrying him on my back, I've had enough of that already.'

'It is sufficient,' replied the colonel. 'Mr. O'Brien, I will make you as comfortable as I can ; and when you are tired of attending your friend, my little daughter shall take your place. You'll find her a kind little nurse, Mr. Simple.'

I could not refrain from tears at the colonel's kindness ; he shook me by the hand, and telling O'Brien that dinner was ready, he called up his daughter, the little girl who had attended me before, and desired her to remain in the room. 'Celeste,' said he, 'you understand a little English ; quite enough to find out what he is in want of. Go and fetch your work, to amuse yourself when he is asleep.' Celeste went out, and returning with her embroidery, sat down by the head of the bed : the colonel and O'Brien then quitted the room. Celeste then commenced her embroidery, and as her eyes were cast down upon her work, I was able to look at her without her observing it. As I said before, she was a very beautiful little girl ; her hair was light brown, eyes very large, and eye-

brows drawn as if with a pair of compasses ; her nose and mouth were also very pretty ; but it was not so much her features, as the expression of her countenance, which was so beautiful, so modest, so sweet, and so intelligent. When she smiled, which she almost always did when she spoke, her teeth were like two rows of little pearls.

I had not looked at her long, before she raised her eyes from her work, and perceiving that I was looking at her, said, ‘ You want—something—want drink—I speak very little English.’

‘ Nothing, I thank ye,’ replied I : ‘ I only want to go to sleep.’

‘ Then—shut—your eye,’ replied she, smiling ; and she went to the window, and drew down the blinds to darken the room. But I could not sleep ; the remembrance of what had occurred—in a few hours wounded, and a prisoner—the thought of my father and mother’s anxiety ; with the prospect of going to a prison and close confinement, as soon as I was recovered, passed in succession in my mind, and, together with the actual pain of my wound, prevented me from obtaining any rest. The little girl several times opened the curtain to ascertain whether I slept or wanted anything, and then as softly retired. In the evening, the surgeon called again ; he felt my pulse, and directing cold applications to my leg, which had swelled considerably, and was becoming very painful, told Colonel O’Brien, that, although I had considerable fever, I was doing as well as could be

expected under the circumstances. But I shall not dwell upon my severe sufferings for a fortnight, after which the ball was extracted ; nor upon how carefully I was watched by O'Brien, the colonel, and little Celeste, during my peevishness and irritation, arising from pain and fever. I felt grateful to them, but particularly to Celeste, who seldom quitted me for more than half-an-hour ; and, as I gradually recovered, tried all she could to amuse me.

CHAPTER XIX

We remove to very unpleasant quarters—Birds of a feather won't always flock together—O'Brien cuts a cutter midshipman, and gets a taste of French steel—Altogether *flat* work—A walk into the interior.

As soon as I was well enough to attend to my little nurse, we became very intimate, as might be expected. Our chief employment was teaching each other French and English. Having the advantage of me in knowing a little before we met, and also being much quicker of apprehension, she very soon began to speak English fluently, long before I could make out a short sentence in French. However, as it was our chief employment, and both were anxious to communicate with each other, I learnt it very fast. In five weeks I was out of bed, and could limp about the room ; and before two months were over, I was quite recovered. The colonel, however, would not report me to the governor ; I remained on a sofa during the day, but at dusk I stole out of the house, and walked about with Celeste. I never passed such a happy time as the last fortnight ; the only drawback was the remembrance that I should soon have to exchange it for a prison. I was more easy about my father and mother, as O'Brien had written to them, assuring them that I was doing well ; and besides, a few days after our capture,

the frigate had run in, and sent a flag of truce to inquire if we were alive or made prisoners ; at the same time Captain Savage sent on shore all our clothes, and two hundred dollars in cash for our use. I knew that even if O'Brien's letter did not reach them, they were sure to hear from Captain Savage that I was doing well. But the idea of parting with Celeste, towards whom I felt such gratitude and affection, was most painful ; and when I talked about it, poor Celeste would cry so much, that I could not help joining her, although I kissed away her tears. At the end of twelve weeks, the surgeon could no longer withhold his report, and we were ordered to be ready in two days to march to Toulon, where we were to join another party of prisoners, to proceed with them into the interior. I must pass over our parting, which the reader may imagine was very painful. I promised to write to Celeste, and she promised that she would answer my letters, if it were permitted. We shook hands with Colonel O'Brien, thanking him for his kindness, and much to his regret, we were taken in charge by two French cuirassiers, who were waiting at the door. As we preferred being continued on parole until our arrival at Toulon, the soldiers were not at all particular about watching us : and we set off on horseback, O'Brien and I going first, and the French cuirassiers following us in the rear.

We trotted, or walked, along the road very comfortably. The weather was delightful ; we were in high spirits, and almost forgot that we

were prisoners. The cuirassiers followed us at a distance of twenty yards, conversing with each other, and O'Brien observed that it was amazingly genteel of the French governor to provide us with two servants in such handsome liveries. The evening of the second day we arrived at Toulon, and as soon as we entered the gates, we were delivered into the custody of an officer, with a very sinister cast of countenance, who, after some conversation with the cuirassiers, told us in a surly tone that our parole was at an end, and gave us in charge of a corporal's guard, with directions to conduct us to the prison near the Arsenal. We presented the cuirassiers with four dollars each, for their civility, and were then hurried away to our place of captivity. I observed to O'Brien, that I was afraid that we must now bid farewell to anything like pleasure. 'You're right there, Peter,' replied he : 'but there's a certain jewel called Hope, that somebody found at the bottom of his chest, when it was clean empty, and so we must not lose sight of it, but try and escape as soon as we can ; but the less we talk about it the better.' In a few minutes we arrived at our destination : the door was opened, ourselves and our bundles, (for we had only selected a few things for our march, the colonel promising to forward the remainder as soon as we wrote to inform him to which dépôt we were consigned,) were rudely shoved in ; and as the doors again closed, and the heavy bolts were shot, I felt a creeping, chilly sensation, pass through my whole body.



Peter and O'Brien in a French Prison

As soon as we could see—for although the prison was not very dark, yet so suddenly thrown in, after the glare of a bright, sun-shiny day, at first we could distinguish nothing—we found ourselves in company with about thirty English sailors. Most of them were sitting down on the pavement, or on boxes, or bundles containing their clothes that they had secured, conversing with each other, or playing at cards or draughts. Our entrance appeared to excite little attention ; after having raised their eyes to indulge their curiosity, they continued their pursuits. I have often thought what a feeling of selfishness appeared to pervade the whole of them. At the time I was shocked, as I expected immediate sympathy and commiseration ; but afterwards I was not surprised. Many of these poor fellows had been months in the prison, and a short confinement will produce that indifference to the misfortunes of others which I then observed. Indeed, one man, who was playing at cards, looked up for a moment as we came in, and cried out, ‘ Hurrah, my lads ! the more the merrier,’ as if he really was pleased to find that there were others who were as unfortunate as himself. We stood looking at the groups for about ten minutes, when O’Brien observed, ‘ that we might as well come to an anchor, foul ground being better than no bottom ’ ; so we sat down in a corner, upon our bundles, where we remained for more than an hour, surveying the scene, without speaking a word to each other. I could not speak—I felt so very miserable. I

thought of my father and mother in England, of my captain and my messmates, who were sailing about so happily in the frigate, of the kind Colonel O'Brien, and dear little Celeste, and the tears trickled down my cheeks as these scenes of former happiness passed through my mind in quick succession. O'Brien did not speak but once, and then he only said, 'This is dull work, Peter.'

We had been in the prison about two hours, when a lad in a very greasy, ragged jacket, with a pale emaciated face, came up to us, and said, 'I perceive by your uniforms that you are both officers, as well as myself.'

O'Brien stared at him for a little while, and then answered, 'Upon my soul and honour, then, you've the advantage of us, for it's more than I could perceive in you ; but I'll take your word for it. Pray what ship may have had the misfortune of losing such a credit to the service ?'

'Why, I belonged to the Snapper cutter,' replied the young lad ; 'I was taken in a prize, which the commanding officer had given in my charge to take to Gibraltar : but they won't believe that I'm an officer. I have applied for officer's allowance and rations, and they won't give them to me.'

'Well, but they know that we are officers,' replied O'Brien : 'why do they shove us in here, with the common seamen ?'

'I suppose you are only put in here for the present,' replied the cutter's midshipman ; 'but why, I cannot tell.'

Nor could we, until afterwards, when we found out, as our narrative will show, that the officer who received us from the cuirassiers, had once quarrelled with Colonel O'Brien, who first pulled his nose, and afterwards ran him through the body. Being told by the cuirassiers that we were much esteemed by Colonel O'Brien, he resolved to annoy us as much as he could ; and when he sent up the document announcing our arrival, he left out the word ' Officers,' and put us in confinement with the common seamen. ' It's very hard upon me not to have my regular allowance as an officer,' continued the midshipman. ' They only give me a black loaf and three sous a day. If I had had my best uniform on, they never would have disputed my being an officer ; but the scoundrels who retook the prize, stole all my traps, and I have nothing but this old jacket.'

' Why, then,' replied O'Brien, ' you'll know the value of dress for the future. You cutter and gun-brig midshipmen go about in such a dirty state, that you are hardly acknowledged by us who belong to frigates, to be officers, much less gentlemen. You look so dirty and so slovenly when we pass you in the dock-yard, that we give you a wide berth ; how then can you suppose strangers to believe that you are either officers or gentlemen ? Upon my conscience, I absolve the Frenchmen from all prejudice, for, as to your being an officer, we, as Englishmen, have nothing but your bare word for it.'

' Well, it's very hard,' replied the lad, ' to be

attacked this way by a brother officer ; your coat will be as shabby as mine, before you have been here long.'

'That's very true, my darling,' returned O'Brien ; 'but at least I shall have the pleasant reflection that I came in as a gentleman, although I may not exactly go out under the same appearance. Good night, and pleasant dreams to you !' I thought O'Brien rather cross in speaking in such a way, but he was himself always as remarkably neat and well dressed, as he was handsome and well made.

Fortunately we were not destined to remain long in this detestable hole. After a night of misery, during which we remained sitting on our bundles, and sleeping how we could, leaning with our backs against the damp wall, we were roused at daybreak by the unbarring of the prison doors, followed up with an order to go into the prison yard. We were huddled out like a flock of sheep, by a file of soldiers with loaded muskets ; and, as we went into the yard, were ranged two and two. The same officer who ordered us into prison, commanded the detachment of soldiers who had us in charge. O'Brien stepped out of the ranks, and, addressing them, stated that we were officers, and had no right to be treated like common sailors. The French officer replied, that he had better information, and that we wore coats which did not belong to us ; upon which O'Brien was in a great rage, calling the officer a liar, and demanding satisfaction for the insult, appealing to the French soldiers, and stating, that Colonel

O'Brien, who was at Cette, was his countryman, and had received him for two months into his house upon parole, which was quite sufficient to establish his being an officer. The French soldiers appeared to side with O'Brien after they had heard this explanation, stating that no common English sailor could speak such good French, and that they were present when we were sent in on parole, and they asked the officer whether he intended to give satisfaction. The officer stormed, and drawing his sword out of the scabbard, struck O'Brien with the flat of the blade, looking at him with contempt, and ordering him into the ranks. I could not help observing that, during this scene, the men-of-war sailors who were among the prisoners, were very indignant, while, on the contrary, those captured in merchant vessels appeared to be pleased at the insult offered to O'Brien. One of the French soldiers then made a sarcastic remark, that the French officer did not much like the name of O'Brien. This so enraged the officer, that he flew at O'Brien, pushed him back into the ranks, and taking out a pistol, threatened to shoot him through the head. I must do the justice to the French soldiers, that they all cried out 'shame !' They did not appear to have the same discipline, or the same respect for an officer, as the soldiers have in our service, or they would not have been so free in their language ; yet, at the same time, they obeyed all his orders on service very implicitly.

When O'Brien returned to the ranks, he

looked defiance at the officer, telling him, 'That he would pocket the affront very carefully, as he intended to bring it out again upon a future and more suitable occasion.' We were then marched out in ranks, two and two, being met at the street by two drummers, and a crowd of people, who had gathered to witness our departure. The drums beat, and away we went. The officer who had charge of us, mounted a small horse, galloping up and down from one end of the ranks to the other, with his sword drawn, bullying, swearing, and striking with the flat of the blade at any one of the prisoners who was not in his proper place. When we were close to the gates, we were joined by another detachment of prisoners : we were then ordered to halt, and were informed, through an interpreter, that any one attempting to escape would immediately be shot ; after which information we once more proceeded on our route.

Nothing remarkable occurred during our first day's march, except perhaps a curious conversation between O'Brien and one of the French soldiers, in which they disputed about the comparative bravery of the two nations. O'Brien, in his argument, told the Frenchman that his countrymen could not stand a charge of English bayonets. The Frenchman replied that there was no doubt but the French were quite as brave as the English—even more so ; and that, as for not standing the charge of bayonets, it was not because they were less brave ; but the fact was, that they were most

excessively *ticklish*. We had black bread and sour wine served out to us this day, when we halted to refresh. O'Brien persuaded a soldier to purchase something for us more eatable ; but the French officer heard of it, and was very angry, ordering the soldier to the rear.

CHAPTER XX

O'Brien fights a duel with a French officer and proves that the great art of fencing is knowing nothing about it—We arrive at our new quarters, which we find very secure.

AT night we arrived at a small town, the name of which I forget. Here we were all put into an old church for the night, and a very bad night we passed. They did not even give us a little straw to lie down upon ; the roof of the church had partly fallen in, and the moon shone through very brightly. This was some comfort : for to have been shut up in the dark, seventy-five in number, would have been very miserable. We were afraid to lie down anywhere, as, like all ruined buildings in France, the ground was covered with filth, and the smell was shocking. O'Brien was very thoughtful, and would hardly answer any question that I put to him ; it was evident that he was brooding over the affront which he had received from the French officer. At daybreak the door of the church was again opened by the French soldiers, and we were conducted to the square of the town, where we found the troops quartered, drawn up with their officers, to receive us from the detachment who had escorted us from Toulon. We were very much pleased at this, as we knew that we should be forwarded by another detachment, and thus be rid of the

brutal officer who had hitherto had charge of the prisoners. But we were rid of him in another way. As the French officers walked along our ranks to look at us, I perceived among them a captain, whom we had known very intimately when we were living at Cette with Colonel O'Brien. I cried out his name immediately ; he turned round, and seeing O'Brien and me, he came up to us, shaking us by the hand, and expressing his surprise at finding us in such a situation. O'Brien explained to him how we had been treated, at which he expressed his indignation, as did the other officers who had collected round us. The major who commanded the troops in the town, turned to the French officer (he was only a lieutenant) who had conducted us from Toulon, and demanded of him his reason for behaving to us in such an unworthy manner. He denied having treated us ill, and said that he had been informed that we had put on officers' dresses which did not belong to us. At this O'Brien declared that he was a liar, and a cowardly *foutre*, that he had struck him with the back of his sabre, which he had dared not have done, if he had not been a prisoner ; adding, that all he requested was satisfaction for the insult offered to him, and appealed to the officers whether, if it were refused, the lieutenant's epaulets ought not to be cut off his shoulders. The major commandant and the officers retired to consult, and, after a few minutes, they agreed that the lieutenant was bound to give the satisfaction required. The lieutenant replied that

he was ready ; but, at the same time, did not appear to be very willing. The prisoners were left in charge of the soldiers, under a junior officer, while the others, accompanied by O'Brien, myself, and the lieutenant, walked to a short distance outside of the town. As we proceeded there, I asked O'Brien with what weapons they would fight.

' I take it for granted,' replied he, ' that it will be with the small sword.'

' But,' said I, ' do you know anything about fencing ? '

' Devil a bit, Peter ; but that's all in my favour.'

' How can that be ? ' replied I.

' I'll tell you, Peter. If one man fences well, and another is but an indifferent hand at it, it is clear that the first will run the other through the body ; but, if the other knows nothing at all about it, why then, Peter, the case is not quite so clear : because the good fencer is almost as much puzzled by your ignorance, as you are by his skill, and you become on more equal terms. Now, Peter, I've made up my mind that I'll run that fellow through the body, and so I will, as sure as I am an O'Brien.'

' Well, I hope you will ; but pray do not be too sure.'

' It's feeling sure, that will make me able to do it, Peter. By the blood of the O'Briens ! didn't he slap me with his sword, as if I were a clown in the pantomime—Peter, I'll kill the harlequin scoundrel, and my word's as good as my bond ! '



The Duel with the French Officer

By this time we had arrived at the ground. The French lieutenant stripped to his shirt and trowsers ; O'Brien did the same, kicking his boots off, and standing upon the wet grass in his stockings. The swords were measured, and handed to them ; they took their distance, and set to. I must say, that I was breathless with anxiety ; the idea of losing O'Brien struck me with grief and terror. I then felt the value of all his kindness to me, and would have taken his place, and have been run through the body, rather than he should have been hurt. At first, O'Brien put himself in the correct attitude of defence, in imitation of the lieutenant, but this was for a very few seconds ; he suddenly made a spring, and rushed on to his adversary, stabbing at him with a velocity quite astonishing, the lieutenant parrying in his defence, until at last he had an opportunity of lounging at O'Brien. O'Brien, who no longer kept his left arm raised in equipoise, caught the sword of the lieutenant at within six inches of the point, and directing it under his left arm, as he rushed in, passed his own through the lieutenant's body. It was all over in less than a minute—the lieutenant did not live half-an-hour afterwards. The French officers were very much surprised at the result, for they perceived at once, that O'Brien knew nothing of fencing. O'Brien gathered a tuft of grass, wiped the sword, which he presented to the officer to whom it belonged, and thanking the major and the whole of them for their impartiality and gentlemanlike conduct, led the way to the

square, where he again took his station in the ranks of the prisoners.

Shortly after, the major commandant came up to us, and asked whether we would accept of our parole, as, in that case, we might travel as we pleased. We consented, with many thanks for his civility and kindness ; but I could not help thinking at the time, that the French officers were a little mortified at O'Brien's success, although they were too honourable to express the feeling. O'Brien told me, after we had quitted the town, that had it not been for the handsome conduct of the officers, he would not have accepted our parole, as he felt convinced that we could have easily made our escape. We talked over the matter a long while, and at last agreed that there would be a better chance of success by-and-by, when more closely guarded, than there would be now, under consideration of all circumstances, as it required previously concerted arrangements to get out of the country.

I had almost forgot to say, that on our return after the duel, the cutter's midshipman called out to O'Brien, requesting him to state to the commandant that he was also an officer ; but O'Brien replied, that there was no evidence for it but his bare word. If he was an officer, he must prove it himself, as everything in his appearance flatly contradicted his assertion.

'It's very hard,' replied the midshipman, 'that because my jacket's a little tarry or so, I must lose my rank.'

'My dear fellow,' replied O'Brien, 'it's not

because your jacket's a little tarry ; it is because, what the Frenchmen call your *tout ensemble*, is quite disgraceful in an officer. Look at your face in the first puddle, and you'll find that it would dirty the water you look into. Look at your shoulders above your ears, and your back with a bow like a *kink* in a cable. Your trowsers, sir, you have pulled your legs too far through, showing a foot and a half of worsted stockings. In short, look at yourself altogether, and then tell me, provided you be an officer, whether from respect to the service, it would not be my duty to contradict it. It goes against my conscience, my dear fellow ; but recollect that when we arrive at the *dépôt*, you will be able to prove it ; so it's only waiting a little while until the captains will pass their word for you, which is more than I will.'

'Well, it's very hard,' replied the midshipman, 'that I must go on eating this black rye bread ; and very unkind of you.'

'It's very kind of me, you spalpeen of the Snapper. Prison will be a paradise to you, when you get into good commons. How you'll relish your grub by-and-by ! So now shut your pan, or by the tail of Jonah's whale, I'll swear you're a Spaniard.'

I could not help thinking that O'Brien was very severe upon the poor lad, and I expostulated with him afterwards. He replied, 'Peter, if, as a cutter's midshipman, he is a bit of an officer, the devil a bit is he of a gentleman, either born or bred : and I'm not bound to bail every blackguard-looking chap that I

meet. By the head of St. Peter, I would blush to be seen in his company, if I were in the wildest bog in Ireland, with nothing but an old crow as spectator.'

We were now again permitted to be on our parole, and received every attention and kindness from the different officers who commanded the detachments which passed the prisoners from one town to the other. In a few days we arrived at Montpellier, where we had orders to remain a short time until directions were received from government as to the dépôts for prisoners to which we were to be sent. At this delightful town, we had unlimited parole, not even a gend'arme accompanying us. We lived at the table d'hôte, were permitted to walk about where we pleased, and amused ourselves every evening at the theatre. During our stay there, we wrote to Colonel O'Brien at Cette, thanking him for his kindness, and narrating what had occurred since we parted. I also wrote to Celeste, inclosing my letter unsealed in the one to Colonel O'Brien. I told her the history of O'Brien's duel, and all I could think would interest her ; how sorry I was to have parted from her ; that I never would forget her ; and trusted that some day, as she was only half a Frenchwoman, that we should meet again. Before we left Montpellier, we had the pleasure of receiving answers to our letters : the Colonel's letters were very kind, particularly the one to me, in which he called me his dear boy, and hoped that I should soon rejoin my friends, and prove an ornament to my

country. In his letter to O'Brien, he requested him not to run me into useless danger—to recollect that I was not so well able to undergo extreme hardship. I have no doubt but that this caution referred to O'Brien's intention to escape from prison, which he had not concealed from the colonel, and the probability that I would be a partner in the attempt. The answer from Celeste was written in English ; but she must have had assistance from her father, or she could not have succeeded so well. It was like herself, very kind and affectionate ; and also ended with wishing me a speedy return to my friends, who must (she said) be so fond of me, that she despaired of ever seeing me more, but that she consoled herself as well as she could with the assurance that I should be happy. I forgot to say, that Colonel O'Brien, in his letter to me, stated that he expected immediate orders to leave Cette, and take the command of some military post in the interior, or join the army, but which, he could not tell ; that they had packed up everything, and he was afraid that our correspondence must cease, as he could not state to what place we should direct our letters. I could not help thinking at the time, that it was a delicate way of pointing out to us, that it was not right that he should correspond with us in our relative situations ; but still, I was sure that he was about to leave Cette, for he never would have made use of a subterfuge.

I must here acquaint the reader with a circumstance which I forgot to mention, which

was, that when Captain Savage sent in a flag of truce with our clothes and money, I thought that it was but justice to O'Brien that they should know on board of the frigate the gallant manner in which he had behaved. I knew that he never would tell himself, so, ill as I was at the time, I sent for Colonel O'Brien, and requested him to write down my statement of the affair, in which I mentioned how O'Brien had spiked the last gun, and had been taken prisoner by so doing, together with his attempting to save me. When the colonel had written all down, I requested that he would send for the major who first entered the fort with the troops, and translate it to him in French. This he did in my presence, and the major declared every word to be true. 'Will he attest it, colonel, as it may be of great service to O'Brien?' The major immediately assented. Colonel O'Brien then enclosed my letter, with a short note from himself, to Captain Savage, paying him a compliment, and assuring him that his gallant young officers should be treated with every attention, and all the kindness which the rules of war would admit of. O'Brien never knew that I had sent that letter, as the colonel, at my request, kept the secret.

In ten days, we received an order to march on the following morning. The sailors, among whom was our poor friend the midshipman of the Snapper cutter, were ordered to Verdun; O'Brien and I, with eight masters of merchant vessels, who joined us at Montpellier, were directed by the government to be sent to Givet,

a fortified town in the department of Ardennes. But, at the same time, orders arrived from government to treat the prisoners with great strictness, and not to allow any parole ; the reason of this, we were informed, was, that accounts had been sent to government of the death of the French officer in the duel with O'Brien, and they had expressed their dissatisfaction at its having been permitted. Indeed, I very much doubt whether it would have been permitted in our country, but the French officers are almost romantically chivalrous in their ideas of honour ; in fact, as enemies, I have always considered them as worthy antagonists to the English, and they appear more respectable in themselves, and more demanding our good-will in that situation, than they do when we meet them as friends, and are acquainted with the other points of their character, which lessen them in our estimation.

I shall not dwell upon a march of three weeks, during which we alternately received kind or unhandsome treatment, according to the dispositions of those who had us in charge ; but I must observe, that it was invariably the case, that officers who were gentlemen by birth treated us with consideration, while those who had sprung from nothing during the Revolution, were harsh, and sometimes even brutal. It was exactly four months from the time of our capture, that we arrived at our destined prison at Givet.

' Peter,' said O'Brien, as he looked hastily at the fortifications, and the river which divided

the two towns, 'I see no reason, either English or French, that we should not eat our Christmas dinner in England. I've a bird's-eye view of the outside, and now, have only to find out whereabouts we may be in the inside.'

I must say that, when I looked at the ditches and high ramparts, I had a different opinion ; so had a gend'arme who was walking by our side, and who had observed O'Brien's scrutiny, and who quietly said to him in French, '*Vous le croyez possible ?*'

'Everything is possible to a brave man—the French armies have proved that,' answered O'Brien.

'You are right,' replied the gend'arme, pleased with the compliment to his nation ; 'I wish you success, you will deserve it ; but——' and he shook his head.

'If I could but obtain a plan of the fortress,' said O'Brien, 'I would give five Napoleons for one,' and he looked at the gend'arme.

'I cannot see any objection to an officer, although a prisoner, studying fortification,' replied the gend'arme. 'In two hours you will be within the walls ; and now I recollect, in the map of the two towns, the fortress is laid down sufficiently accurately to give you an idea of it. But we have conversed too long.' So saying, the gend'arme dropped into the rear.

In a quarter of an hour, we arrived at the Place d'Armes, where we were met, as usual, by another detachment of troops, and drummers, who paraded us through the town previous to our being drawn up before the

governor's house. This, I ought to have observed, was by order of government, done at every town we passed through : it was very contemptible, but prisoners were so scarce, that they made all the display of us that they could. As we stopped at the governor's house, the gend'arme who had left us in the square made a sign to O'Brien, as much as to say, I have it. O'Brien took out five Napoleons, which he wrapped in paper and held in his hand. In a minute or two, the gend'arme came up and presented O'Brien with an old silk handkerchief, saying, '*Votre mouchoir, monsieur.*'

'*Merci,*' replied O'Brien, putting the handkerchief which contained the map into his pocket, '*voici à boire, mon ami*' ; and he slipped the paper with the five Napoleons into the hand of the gend'arme, who immediately retreated.

This was very fortunate for us, as we afterwards discovered that a mark had been put against O'Brien's and my name, not to allow parole or permission to leave the fortress, even under surveillance. Indeed, even if it had not been so, we never should have obtained it, as the lieutenant killed by O'Brien was nearly related to the commandant of the fortress, who was as much a *mauvais sujet* as his kinsman. Having waited the usual hour before the governor's house, to answer to our muster roll, and to be stared at, we were dismissed ; and in a few minutes, found ourselves shut up in one of the strongest fortresses in France.

CHAPTER XXI

O'Brien receives his commission as Lieutenant, and then we take French leave of Givet.

IF I doubted the practicability of escape when I examined the exterior, when we were ushered into the interior of the fortress I felt that it was impossible, and I stated my opinion to O'Brien. We were conducted into a yard surrounded by a high wall ; the buildings appropriated for the prisoners were built with *lean-to* roofs on one side, and at each side of the square was a sentry looking down upon us. It was very much like the dens which they now build for bears, only so much larger. O'Brien answered me with a ' Pish ! Peter, it's the very security of the place which will enable us to get out of it. But don't talk, as there are always spies about who understand English.'

We were shown into a room allotted to six of us ; our baggage was examined, and then delivered over to us. ' Better and better, Peter,' observed O'Brien, ' they've not found it out ! ' ' What ? ' inquired I.

' Oh, only a little selection of articles, which might be useful to us by-and-by.'

He then showed me what I never before was aware of : that he had a false bottom to his trunk ; but it was papered over like the rest, and very ingeniously concealed. ' And what is there, O'Brien ? ' inquired I.

‘Never mind ; I had them made at Montpelier. You’ll see, by-and-by.’

The others, who were lodged in the same room, then came in, and, after staying a quarter of an hour, went away at the sound of the dinner-bell. ‘Now, Peter,’ said O’Brien, ‘I must get rid of my load. Turn the key.’

O’Brien then undressed himself, and when he threw off his shirt and drawers, showed me a rope of silk, with a knot at every two feet, about half an inch in size, wound round and round his body. There were about sixty feet of it altogether. As I unwound it, he, turning round and round, observed, ‘Peter, I’ve worn this rope ever since I left Montpelier, and you’ve no idea of the pain I have suffered ; but we must go to England, that’s decided upon.’

When I looked at O’Brien, as the rope was wound off, I could easily imagine that he had really been in great pain ; in several places his flesh was quite raw from the continual friction, and after it was all unwound, and he had put on his clothes, he fainted away. I was very much alarmed, but I recollected to put the rope into the trunk, and take out the key, before I called for assistance. He soon came to, and on being asked what was the matter, said that he was subject to fits from his infancy. He looked earnestly at me, and I showed him the key, which was sufficient.

For some days O’Brien, who really was not very well, kept to his room. During this time, he often examined the map given him by the

gend'arme. One day he said to me, 'Peter, can you swim?'

'No,' replied I; 'but never mind that.'

'But I must mind it, Peter; for observe, we shall have to cross the river Meuse, and boats are not always to be had. You observe, that this fortress is washed by the river on one side: and as it is the strongest side, it is the least guarded—we must escape by it. I can see my way clear enough till we get to the second rampart on the river, but when we drop into the river, if you cannot swim, I must contrive to hold you up, somehow or another.'

'Are you then determined to escape, O'Brien? I cannot perceive how we are even to get up this wall, with four sentries staring us in the face.'

'Never do you mind that, Peter, mind your own business; and first tell me, do you intend to try your luck with me?'

'Yes,' replied I, 'most certainly; if you have sufficient confidence in me to take me as your companion.'

'To tell you the truth, Peter, I would not give a farthing to escape without you. We were taken together, and, please God, we'll take ourselves off together; but that must not be for this month; our greatest help will be the dark nights and foul weather.'

The prison was by all accounts very different from Verdun and some others. We had no parole, and but little communication with the townspeople. Some were permitted to come in and supply us with various articles; but their

baskets were searched, to see that they contained nothing that might lead to an escape on the part of the prisoners. Without the precautions that O'Brien had taken, any attempt would have been useless. Still, O'Brien, as soon as he left his room, did obtain several little articles—especially balls of twine—for one of the amusements of the prisoners was flying kites. This, however, was put a stop to, in consequence of one of the strings, whether purposely or not, I cannot say, catching the lock of the musket carried by one of the sentries who looked down upon us, and twitching it out of his hand ; after which an order was given by the commandant for no kites to be permitted. This was fortunate for us, as O'Brien, by degrees, purchased all the twine belonging to the other prisoners ; and, as we were more than three hundred in number, it amounted to sufficient to enable him, by stealth, to lay it up into very strong cord, or rather, into a sort of square plait, known only to sailors. ' Now, Peter,' said he one day, ' I want nothing more than an umbrella for you.'

' Why an umbrella for me ? '

' To keep you from being drowned with too much water, that's all.'

' Rain won't drown me.'

' No, no, Peter ; but buy a new one as soon as you can.'

I did so. O'Brien boiled up a quantity of bees'-wax and oil, and gave it several coats of this preparation. He then put it carefully away in the ticking of his bed. I asked him whether he intended to make known his plan to any of

the other prisoners ; he replied in the negative, saying, that there were so many of them who could not be trusted, that he would trust no one. We had been now about two months in Givet, when a Steel's List was sent to a lieutenant, who was confined there. The lieutenant came up to O'Brien, and asked him his christian name. ' Terence, to be sure,' replied O'Brien.

' Then,' answered the lieutenant, ' I may congratulate you on your promotion, for here you are upon the list of August.'

' Sure there must be some trifling mistake ; let me look at it. Terence O'Brien, sure enough ; but now the question is, has any other fellow robbed me of my name and promotion at the same time ? Bother, what can it mane ? I won't belave it—not a word of it. I've no more interest than a dog who drags cat's meat.'

' Really, O'Brien,' observed I, ' I cannot see why you should not be made ; I am sure you deserve your promotion for your conduct when you were taken prisoner.'

' And what did I do then, you simple Peter, but put you on my back as the men do their hammocks when they are piped down ? but, barring all claim, how could any one know what took place in the battery, except you, and I, and the armourer, who lay dead ? So explain that, Peter, if you can.'

' I think I can,' replied I, after the lieutenant had left us ; and then I told O'Brien how I had written to Captain Savage, and had had

the fact attested by the major who had made us prisoners.

‘Well, Peter,’ said O’Brien, after a pause, ‘there is a fable about a lion and a mouse. If, by your means, I have obtained my promotion, why, then the mouse is a finer baste than the lion ; but instead of being happy, I shall now be miserable until the truth is ascertained one way or the other, and that’s another reason why I must set off to England as fast as I can.’

For a few days after this O’Brien was very uneasy, but fortunately letters arrived by that time ; one to me from my father, in which he requested me to draw for whatever money I might require, saying that the whole family would retrench in every way to give me all the comfort which might be obtained in my unfortunate situation. I wept at his kindness, and more than ever longed to throw myself in his arms, and thank him. He also told me that my uncle William was dead, and that there was only one between him and the title, but that my grandfather was in good health, and had been very kind to him lately. My mother was much afflicted at my having been made a prisoner, and requested I would write as often as I could. O’Brien’s letter was from Captain Savage ; the frigate had been sent home with despatches, and O’Brien’s conduct represented to the Admiralty, which had, in consequence, promoted him to the rank of lieutenant. O’Brien came to me with the letter, his countenance radiant with joy as he put it into my

hands. In return I put mine into his, and he read it over.

‘Peter, my boy, I’m under great obligations to you. When you were wounded and feverish, you thought of me at a time when you had quite enough to think of yourself; but I never thank in words. I see your uncle William is dead. How many more uncles have you?’

‘My uncle John, who is married, and has already two daughters.’

‘Blessings on him; may he stick to the female line of business! Peter, my boy, you shall be a lord before you die.’

‘Nonsense, O’Brien; I have no chance. Don’t put such foolish ideas in my head.’

‘What chance had I of being a lieutenant, and am I not one? Well, Peter, you’ve helped to make a lieutenant of me, but I’ll make a *man* of you, and that’s better. Peter, I perceive, with all your simplicity, that you’re not over and above simple, and that, with all your asking for advice, you can think and act for yourself on an emergency. Now, Peter, these are talents that must not be thrown away in this cursed hole, and therefore, my boy, prepare yourself to quit this place in a week, wind and weather permitting—that is to say, not fair wind and weather, but the fouler the better. Will you be ready at any hour of any night that I call you up?’

‘Yes, O’Brien, I will, and do my best.’

‘No man can do much more, that ever I heard of. But, Peter, do me one favour; as I

really am a lieutenant, just touch your hat to me only once, that's all : but I wish the compliment, just to see how it looks.'

'Lieutenant O'Brien,' said I, touching my hat, 'have you any further orders?'

'Yes, sir,' replied he ; 'that you never presume to touch your hat to me again, unless we sail together, and then that's a different sort of thing.'

About a week afterwards, O'Brien came to me, and said, 'The new moon's quartered in with foul weather ; if it holds, prepare for a start. I have put what is necessary in your little haversack ; it may be to-night. Go to bed now, and sleep for a week if you can, for you'll get but little sleep, if we succeed, for the week to come.'

This was about eight o'clock. I went to bed, and about twelve I was roused by O'Brien, who told me to dress myself carefully, and come down to him in the yard. I did so without disturbing anybody, and found the night as dark as pitch, (it was then November,) and raining in torrents ; the wind was high, howling round the yard, and sweeping in the rain in every direction as it eddyed to and fro. It was some time before I could find O'Brien, who was hard at work ; and, as I had already been made acquainted with all his plans, I will now explain them. At Montpelier he had procured six large pieces of iron, about eighteen inches long, with a gimblet at one end of each, and a square at the other, which fitted to a handle which unshipped. For precaution, he had a

spare handle, but each handle fitted to all the irons. O'Brien had screwed one of these pieces of iron between the interstices of the stones of which the wall was built, and sitting astride on that, was fixing another about three feet above. When he had accomplished this, he stood upon the lower iron, and supporting himself by the second, which about met his hip, he screwed in a third, always fixing them about six inches on one side of the other, and not one above the other. When he had screwed in his six irons, he was about half up the wall, and then he fastened his rope, which he had carried round his neck, to the upper iron, and lowering himself down, unscrewed the four lower irons ; then ascending by the rope, he stood upon the fifth iron, and, supporting himself by the upper iron, recommenced his task. By these means he arrived in the course of an hour and a half to the top of the wall, where he fixed his last iron, and making his rope fast, he came down again. ' Now, Peter,' said he, ' there is no fear of the sentries seeing us ; if they had the eyes of cats, they could not until we are on the top of the wall ; but then we arrive at the glacis, and we must creep to the ramparts on our bellies. I am going up with all the materials. Give me your haversack—you will go up lighter ; and recollect, should any accident happen to me, you run to bed again. If, on the contrary, I pull the rope up and down three or four times, you may sheer up it as fast as you can.' O'Brien then loaded himself with the other rope, the two knapsacks, iron crows, and other



Peter and O'Brien escaping from Prison

implements he had procured ; and, last of all, with the umbrella. ‘ Peter, if the rope bears me with all this, it is clear it will bear such a creature as you are, therefore don’t be afraid.’ So whispering, he commenced his ascent ; in about three minutes he was up, and the rope pulled. I immediately followed him, and found the rope very easy to climb, from the knots at every two feet, which gave me a hold for my feet, and I was up in as short a time as he was. He caught me by the collar, putting his wet hand on my mouth, and I lay down beside him while he pulled up the rope. We then crawled on our stomachs across the glacis till we arrived at the rampart. The wind blew tremendously, and the rain pattered down so fast, that the sentries did not perceive us ; indeed, it was no fault of theirs, for it was impossible to have made us out. It was some time before O’Brien could find out the point exactly above the drawbridge of the first ditch ; at last he did—he fixed his crow-bar in, and lowered down the rope. ‘ Now, Peter, I had better go first again ; when I shake the rope from below, all’s right.’ O’Brien descended, and in a few minutes the rope again shook : I followed him, and found myself received in his arms upon the meeting of the drawbridge ; but the drawbridge itself was up. O’Brien led the way across the chains, and I followed him. When we had crossed the moat, we found a barrier-gate locked ; this puzzled us. O’Brien pulled out his picklocks to pick it, but without success ; here we were fast. ‘ We must under-

mine the gate. O'Brien ; we must pull up the pavement until we can creep under.' ' Peter, you are a fine fellow ; I never thought of that.' We worked very hard until the hole was large enough, using the crow-bar which was left, and a little wrench which O'Brien had with him. By these means we got under the gate in the course of an hour or more. This gate led to the lower rampart, but we had a covered way to pass through before we arrived at it. We proceeded very cautiously, when we heard a noise ; we stopped, and found that it was a sentry, who was fast asleep, and snoring. Little expecting to find one here, we were puzzled ; pass him we could not well, as he was stationed on the very spot where we required to place our crow-bar to descend the lower rampart into the river. O'Brien thought for a moment. ' Peter,' said he, ' now is the time for you to prove yourself a man. He is fast asleep, but his noise must be stopped. I will stop his mouth, but at the very moment that I do so you must throw open the pan of his musket, and then he cannot fire it.' ' I will, O'Brien ; don't fear me.' We crept cautiously up to him, and O'Brien motioning to me to put my thumb upon the pan, I did so, and the moment that O'Brien put his hand upon the soldier's mouth, I threw open the pan. The fellow struggled, and snapped his lock as a signal, but of course without discharging his musket, and in a minute he was not only gagged but bound by O'Brien, with my assistance. Leaving him there, we proceeded to the ram-

part, and fixing the crow-bar again, O'Brien descended ; I followed him, and found him in the river, hanging on to the rope ; the umbrella was opened and turned upwards ; the preparation made it resist the water, and, as previously explained to me by O'Brien, I had only to hold on at arm's length to two beackets which he had affixed to the point of the umbrella, which was under water. To the same part O'Brien had a tow-line, which taking in his teeth, he towed me down with the stream to about a hundred yards clear of the fortress, where we landed. O'Brien was so exhausted that for a few minutes he remained quite motionless ; I also was benumbed with the cold. 'Peter,' said he, 'thank God we have succeeded so far ; now must we push on as far as we can, for we shall have daylight in two hours.'

O'Brien took out his flask of spirits, and we both drank a half tumbler at least, but we should not, in our state, have been affected with a bottle. We now walked along the river-side till we fell in with a small craft, with a boat towing astern : O'Brien swam to it, and cutting the painter without getting in, towed it on shore. The oars were fortunately in the boat. I got in, we shoved off, and rowed away down the stream till the dawn of day. 'All's right, Peter ; now we'll land. This is the Forest of Ardennes.' We landed, replaced the oars in the boat and pushed her off into the stream, to induce people to suppose that she had broken adrift, and then hastened into the thickest of the wood. It still rained hard ; I shivered,

and my teeth chattered with the cold, but there was no help for it. We again took a dram of spirits, and, worn out with fatigue and excitement, soon fell fast asleep upon a bed of leaves which we had collected together.

CHAPTER XXII

Grave consequences of gravitation—O'Brien enlists himself as a gend'arme, and takes charge of me—We are discovered, and obliged to run for it—The pleasures of a winter bivouac.

It was not until noon that I awoke, when I found that O'Brien had covered me more than a foot deep with leaves to protect me from the weather. I felt quite warm and comfortable ; my clothes had dried on me, but without giving me cold. 'How very kind of you, O'Brien !' said I.

'Not a bit, Peter : you have hard work to go through yet, and I must take care of you. You're but a bud, and I'm a full-blown rose.' So saying, he put the spirit-flask to his mouth, and then handed it to me. 'Now, Peter, we must make a start, for depend upon it, they will scour the country for us ; but this is a large wood, and they may as well attempt to find a needle in a bundle of hay, if we once get into the heart of it.'

'I think,' said I, 'that this forest is mentioned by Shakespeare, in one of his plays.'

'Very likely, Peter,' replied O'Brien : 'but we are at no play-work now ; and what reads amazing prettily, is no joke in reality. I've often observed, that your writers never take the weather into consideration.'

‘ I beg your pardon, O’Brien ; in King Lear the weather was tremendous.’

‘ Very likely ; but who was the king that went out in such weather ? ’

‘ King Lear did, when he was mad.’

‘ So he was, that’s certain, Peter ; but runaway prisoners have some excuse ; so now for a start.’

We set off, forcing our way through the thicket, for about three hours, O’Brien looking occasionally at his pocket compass ; it then was again nearly dark, and O’Brien proposed a halt. We made up a bed of leaves for the night, and slept much more comfortably than we had the night before. All our bread was wet, but as we had no water, it was rather a relief ; the meat we had with us was sufficient for a week. Once more we laid down and fell fast asleep. About five o’clock in the morning I was roused by O’Brien, who at the same time put his hand gently over my mouth. I sat up, and perceived a large fire not far from us. ‘ The Philistines are upon us, Peter,’ said he ; ‘ I have reconnoitred, and they are the gend’armes. I am fearful of going away, as we may stumble upon some more of them. I’ve been thinking what’s best before I waked you ; and it appears to me, that we had better get up the tree, and lie there.’

At that time we were hidden in a copse of underwood, with a large oak in the centre, covered with ivy. ‘ I think so too, O’Brien ; shall we go up now, or wait a little ? ’

‘ Now, to be sure, that they’re eating their prog. Mount you, Peter, and I’ll help you.’

O'Brien shoved me up the tree, and then waiting a little while to bury our haversacks among the leaves, he followed me. He desired me to remain in a very snug position, on the first fork of the tree, while he took another, amongst a bunch of ivy, on the largest bough. There we remained for about an hour, when day dawned. We observed the gend'armes mustered at the break of day, by the corporal, and then they all separated in different directions to scour the wood. We were delighted to perceive this, as we hoped soon to be able to get away; but there was one gend'arme who remained. He walked to and fro, looking everywhere, until he came directly under the tree in which we were concealed. He poked about, until at last he came to the bed of leaves upon which we had slept; these he turned over and over with his bayonet, until he routed out our haversacks. 'Pardi!' exclaimed he, 'where the nest and eggs are, the birds are near.' He then walked round the tree, looking up into every part, but we were well concealed, and he did not discover us for some time. At last he saw me, and ordered me to come down. I paid no attention to him, as I had no signal from O'Brien. He walked round a little farther until he was directly under the branch on which O'Brien lay. Taking up this position, he had a fairer aim at me, and levelled his musket, saying, '*Descendez, ou je tire.*' Still I continued immovable, for I knew not what to do. I shut my eyes, however; the musket shortly afterwards was discharged, and whether

from fear or not I can hardly tell, I lost my hold of a sudden, and down I came. I was stunned with the fall, and thought that I must have been wounded, and was very much surprised, when, instead of the gend'arme, O'Brien came up to me, and asked whether I was hurt. I answered I believed not, and got upon my legs, when I found the gend'arme lying on the ground, breathing heavily, but insensible. When O'Brien perceived the gend'arme level his musket at me, he immediately dropped from the bough, right upon his head ; this occasioned the musket to go off, without hitting me, and at the same time, the weight of O'Brien's body from such a height, killed the gend'arme, for he expired before we left him. 'Now, Peter,' said O'Brien, 'this is the most fortunate thing in the world, and will take us half through the country ; but we have no time to lose.' He then stripped the gend'arme, who still breathed heavily, and dragging him to our bed of leaves, covered him up, threw off his own clothes, which he tied up in a bundle, and gave to me to carry, and put on those of the gend'arme. I could not help laughing at the metamorphosis, and asked O'Brien what he intended. 'Sure, I'm a gend'arme bringing with me a prisoner, who has escaped.' He then tied my hands with a cord, shouldered his musket, and off we set. We now quitted the wood as soon as we could, for O'Brien said that he had no fear for the next ten days ; and so it proved. We had one difficulty, which was, that we were going the wrong way ; but that

was obviated by travelling mostly at night, when no questions were asked, except at the cabarets where we lodged, and they did not know which way we came. When we stopped at night, my youth excited a great deal of commiseration, especially from the females ; and in one instance I was offered assistance to escape. I consented to it, but at the same time informed O'Brien of the plan proposed. O'Brien kept watch—I dressed myself, and was at the open window, when he rushed in, seizing me, and declaring that he would inform the government of the conduct of the parties. Their confusion and distress was very great. They offered O'Brien twenty, thirty, forty napoleons, if he would hush it up, for they were aware of the penalty and imprisonment. O'Brien replied that he would not accept of any money in compromise of his duty, that after he had given me into the charge of the gend'arme of the next post, his business was at an end, and he must return to Flushing, where he was stationed.

‘ I have a sister there,’ replied the hostess, ‘ who keeps an inn. You’ll want good quarters, and a friendly cup ; do not denounce us, and I’ll give you a letter to her, which, if it does not prove of service, you can then return and give the information.’

O'Brien consented ; the letter was delivered, and read to him, in which the sister was requested, by the love she bore to the writer, to do all she could for the bearer, who had the power of making the whole family miserable,

but had refused so to do. O'Brien pocketed the letter, filled his brandy-flask, and saluting all the women, left the cabaret, dragging me after him with a cord. The only difference, as O'Brien observed after he went out, was, that he (O'Brien) kissed all the women, and the women all kissed me. In this way, we had proceeded by Charleroy and Louvain, and were within a few miles of Malines, when a circumstance occurred which embarrassed us not a little. We were following our route, avoiding Malines, which was a fortified town, and at the time were in a narrow lane, with wide ditches, full of water, on each side. At the turning of a sharp corner we met the gend'arme who had supplied O'Brien with a map of the town of Givet. 'Good morning, comrade,' said he to O'Brien, looking earnestly at him, 'whom have we here?'

'A young Englishman, whom I picked up close by, escaped from prison.'

'Where from?'

'He will not say; but I suspect from Givet.'

'There are two who have escaped from Givet,' replied he; 'how they escaped no one can imagine; but,' continued he, again looking at O'Brien, '*avec les braves, il n'y a rien d'impossible.*'

'That is true,' replied O'Brien; 'I have taken one, the other cannot be far off. You had better look for him.'

'I should like to find him,' replied the gend'arme, 'for you know that to retake a runaway

prisoner is certain promotion. You will be made a corporal.'

'So much the better,' replied O'Brien ;
'*adieu, mon ami.*'

'Nay, I merely came for a walk, and will return with you to Malines, where of course you are bound.'

'We shall not get there to-night,' said O'Brien, 'my prisoner is too much fatigued.'

'Well, then, we will go as far as we can ; and I will assist you. Perhaps we may find the second, who, I understand, obtained a map of the fortress by some means or another.'

We at once perceived that we were discovered ; he afterwards told us that the body of a gend'arme had been found in the wood, no doubt murdered by the prisoners, and that the body was stripped naked. 'I wonder,' continued he, 'whether one of the prisoners put on his clothes, and passed as a gend'arme.'

'Peter,' said O'Brien, 'are we to murder this man or not ?'

'I should say not ; pretend to trust him, and then we may give him the slip.' This was said during the time that the gend'arme stopped a moment behind us.

'Well, we'll try ; but first I'll put him off his guard.' When the gend'arme came up with us, O'Brien observed, that the English prisoners were very liberal ; that he knew that a hundred napoleons were often paid for assistance, and he thought that no corporal's rank was equal to a sum that would in France make a man happy and independent for life.

‘Very true,’ replied the gend’arme ; ‘and let me only look upon that sum, and I will guarantee a positive safety out of France.’

‘Then we understand each other,’ replied O’Brien ; ‘this boy will give two hundred—one half shall be yours, if you will assist.’

‘I will think of it,’ replied the gend’arme, who then talked about indifferent subjects, until we arrived at a small town called Acarchot, where we proceeded to a cabaret. The usual curiosity passed over, we were left alone, O’Brien telling the gend’arme that he would expect his reply that night or to-morrow morning. The gend’arme said, to-morrow morning. O’Brien requesting him to take charge of me, he called the woman of the cabaret, to show him a room ; she showed him one or two, which he refused, as not sufficiently safe for the prisoner. The woman laughed at the idea, observing, ‘what had he to fear from a *pauvre enfant* like me ?’

‘Yet this *pauvre enfant* escaped from Givet,’ replied O’Brien. ‘These Englishmen are devils from their birth.’ The last room showed to O’Brien suited him, and he chose it—the woman not presuming to contradict a gend’arme. As soon as they came down again, O’Brien ordered me to bed, and went upstairs with me. He bolted the door, and pulling me to the large chimney, we put our heads up, and whispered that our conversation should not be heard. ‘This man is not to be trusted,’ said O’Brien, ‘and we must give him the slip. I know my way out of the inn, and we must

return the way we came, and then strike off in another direction.'

'But will he permit us?'

'Not if he can help it; but I shall soon find out his manœuvres.'

O'Brien then went and stopped the key-hole, by hanging his handkerchief across it, and stripping himself of his gend'arme uniform, put on his own clothes; then stuffed the blankets and pillow into the gend'arme's dress, and laid it down on the outside of the bed, as if it were a man sleeping in his clothes—indeed it was an admirable deception. He laid his musket by the side of the image, and then did the same to my bed, making it appear as if there was a person asleep in it, of my size, and putting my cap on the pillow. 'Now, Peter, we'll see if he is watching us. He will wait till he thinks we are asleep.' The light still remained in the room, and about an hour afterwards we heard a noise of one treading on the stairs, upon which, as agreed, we crept under the bed. The latch of our door was tried, and finding it open, which he did not expect, the gend'arme entered, and looking at both beds went away. 'Now,' said I, after the gend'arme had gone downstairs, 'O'Brien, ought we not to escape?'

'I've been thinking of it, Peter, and I have come to a resolution that we can manage it better. He is certain to come again in an hour or two. It is only eleven. Now, I'll play him a trick.' O'Brien then took one of the blankets, made it fast to the window, which he left wide open, and at the same time disarranged the

images he had made up, so as to let the gend'arme perceive that they were counterfeit. We again crept under the bed, and, as O'Brien foretold, in about an hour more the gend'arme returned ; our lamp was still burning, but he had a light of his own. He looked at the beds, perceived at once that he had been duped, went to the open window, and then exclaimed, '*Sacre Dieu ! ils m'ont échappés et je ne suis plus corporal. F—tre ! à la chasse !*' He rushed out of the room, and in a few minutes afterwards we heard him open the street door, and go away.

'That will do, Peter,' said O'Brien, laughing ; 'now we'll be off also, although there's no great hurry.' O'Brien then resumed his dress of a gend'arme, and about an hour afterwards we went down, and wishing the hostess all happiness, quitted the cabaret, returning the same road by which we had come. 'Now,' Peter, said O'Brien, 'we're in a bit of a puzzle. This dress won't do any more, still there's a respectability about it, which will not allow me to put it off till the last moment.' We walked on till daylight, when we hid ourselves in a copse of trees. At night we again started for the forest of Ardennes, for O'Brien said our best chance was to return, until they supposed that we had had time to effect our escape ; but we never reached the forest, for on the next day a violent snow-storm came on : it continued without intermission for four days, during which we suffered much. Our money was not exhausted, as I had drawn upon my father for



Rage of the Gendarme at the supposed escape of Peter and O'Brien

£60, which, with the disadvantageous exchange, had given me fifty napoleons. Occasionally O'Brien crept into a cabaret, and obtained provisions ; but, as we dare not be seen together as before, we were always obliged to sleep in the open air, the ground being covered more than three feet with snow. On the fifth day, being then six days from the forest of Ardennes, we hid ourselves in a small wood, about a quarter of a mile from the road. I remained there, while O'Brien, as a gend'arme, went to obtain provisions. As usual, I looked out for the best shelter during his absence, and what was my horror at falling in with a man and woman, who lay dead in the snow, having evidently perished from the inclemency of the weather. Just as I discovered them, O'Brien returned, and I told him : he went with me to view the bodies. They were dressed in a strange attire, ribbons pinned upon their clothes, and two pairs of very high stilts lying by their sides. O'Brien surveyed them, and then said, ' Peter, this is the very best thing that could have happened to us. We may now walk through France without soiling our feet with the cursed country.'

' How do you mean ? ' replied I.

' I mean,' said he, ' that these are the people that we met near Montpellier, who came from the Landes, walking about on their stilts for the amusement of others, to obtain money. In their own country they are obliged to walk so. Now, Peter, it appears to me that the man's clothes will fit me, and the girl's (poor creature,

how pretty she looks, cold in death !) will fit you. All we have to do is to practise a little, and then away we start.'

O'Brien then, with some difficulty, pulled off the man's jacket and trowsers, and having so done, buried him in the snow. The poor girl was despoiled of her gown and upper petticoat with every decency, and also buried. We collected the clothes and stilts, and removed to another quarter of the wood, where we found a well-sheltered spot, and took our meal. As we did not travel that night as usual, we had to prepare our own bed. We scraped away the snow, and made ourselves as comfortable as we could without a fire, but the weather was dreadful.

'Peter,' said O'Brien, 'I'm melancholy. Here, drink plenty'; and he handed me the flask of spirits, which had never been empty.

'Drink more, Peter.'

'I cannot, O'Brien, without being tipsy.'

'Never mind that, drink more; see how these two poor devils lost their lives by falling asleep in the snow. Peter,' said O'Brien, starting up, 'you shan't sleep here—follow me.'

I expostulated in vain. It was almost dark, and he led me to the village, near which he pitched upon a hovel, (a sort of outhouse.) 'Peter, here is shelter; lie down and sleep, and I'll keep the watch. Not a word, I will have it—down at once.'

I did so, and in a very few minutes was fast asleep, for I was worn out with cold and fatigue. For several days we had walked all

night, and the rest we gained by day was trifling. O how I longed for a warm bed with four or five blankets ! Just as the day broke, O'Brien roused me ; he had stood sentry all night, and looked very haggard.

' O'Brien, you are ill,' said I.

' Not a bit ; but I've emptied the brandy-flask ; and that's a bad job. However, it is to be remedied.'

We then returned to the wood in a mizzling rain and fog, for the weather had changed, and the frost had broken up. The thaw was even worse than the frost, and we felt the cold more. O'Brien again insisted upon my sleeping in the outhouse, but this time I positively refused without he would also sleep there, pointing out to him, that we ran no more risk, and perhaps not so much, as if he staid outside. Finding I was positive he at last consented, and we both gained it unperceived. We laid down, but I did not go to sleep for some time, I was so anxious to see O'Brien fast asleep. He went in and out several times, during which I pretended to be fast asleep ; at last it rained in torrents, and then he laid down again, and in a few minutes, overpowered by nature, he fell fast asleep, snoring so loudly, that I was afraid some one would hear us. I then got up and watched, occasionally lying down and slumbering awhile, and then going to the door.

CHAPTER XXIII

Exalted with our success, we march through France without touching the ground—I become feminine—We are voluntary conscripts.

AT daybreak I called O'Brien, who jumped up in a great hurry.

‘Sure I’ve been asleep, Peter!’

‘Yes, you have,’ replied I, ‘and I thank Heaven that you have, for no one could stand such fatigue as you have, much longer; and if you fall ill, what will become of me?’ This was touching him on the right point.

‘Well, Peter, since there’s no harm come of it, there’s no harm done. I’ve had sleep enough for the next week, that’s certain.’

We returned to the wood; the snow had disappeared, and the rain ceased; the sun shone out from between the clouds and we felt warm.

‘Don’t pass so near that way,’ said O’Brien, ‘we shall see the poor creatures, now that the snow is gone. Peter, we must shift our quarters to-night, for I have been to every cabaret in the village, and I cannot go there any more without suspicion, although I am a gend’arme.’

We remained there till the evening, and then set off, still returning towards Givet. About an hour before daylight we arrived at a copse of trees close to the road-side, and surrounded by a ditch, not above a quarter of a mile from

a village. 'It appears to me,' said O'Brien, 'that this will do ; I will now put you there, and then go boldly to the village and see what I can get, for here we must stay at least a week.'

We walked to the copse, and the ditch being rather too wide for me to leap, O'Brien laid the four stilts together, so as to form a bridge, over which I contrived to walk. Tossing to me all the bundles, and desiring me to leave the stilts as a bridge for him on his return, he set off to the village with his musket on his shoulder. He was away two hours, when he returned with a large supply of provisions, the best we had ever had. French saucissons seasoned with garlic, which I thought delightful ; four bottles of brandy, besides his flask ; a piece of hung beef, and six loaves of bread, besides half a baked goose and part of a large pie.

'There,' said he, 'we have enough for a good week ; and look here, Peter, this is better than all.' And he showed me two large horse-rugs.

'Excellent,' replied I ; 'now we shall be comfortable.'

'I paid honestly for all but these rugs,' observed O'Brien ; 'I was afraid to buy them, so I stole them. However, we'll leave them here for those they belong to—it's only borrowing, after all.'

We now prepared a very comfortable shelter with branches, which we wove together, and laying the leaves in the sun to dry, soon obtained a soft bed to put our horse-rugs on, while we covered ourselves up with the other.

Our bridge of stilts we had removed, so that we felt ourselves quite secure from surprise. That evening we did nothing but carouse—the goose, the pie, the saucissons as big as my arm, were alternately attacked, and we went to the ditch to drink water, and then ate again. This was quite happiness to what we had suffered, especially with the prospect of a good bed. At dark, to bed we went, and slept soundly ; I never felt more refreshed during our wanderings. At daylight O'Brien got up.

‘ Now, Peter, a little practice before breakfast.’

‘ What practice do you mean ? ’

‘ Mean ! why on the stilts. I expect in a week that you'll be able to dance a gavotte at least ; for mind me, Peter, you travel out of France upon these stilts, depend upon it.’

O'Brien then took the stilts belonging to the man, giving me those of the woman. We strapped them to our thighs, and by fixing our backs to a tree, contrived to get upright upon them : but at the first attempt to walk, O'Brien fell to the right, and I fell to the left. O'Brien fell against a tree, but I fell on my nose, and made it bleed very much ; however, we laughed and got up again, and although we had several falls, at last we made a better hand of them. We then had some difficulty in getting down again, but we found out how, by again resorting to a tree. After breakfast we strapped them on again, and practised, and so we continued to do for the whole day, when we again attacked our provisions, and fell asleep



Practising the Stilts

under our horse-rug. This continued for five days, by which time, being constantly on the stilts, we became very expert ; and although I could not dance a gavotte—for I did not know what that was—I could hop about with them with the greatest ease.

‘One day’s more practice,’ said O’Brien, ‘for our provisions will last one day more, and then we start ; but this time we must rehearse in costume.’

O’Brien then dressed me in the poor girl’s clothes, and himself in the man’s ; they fitted very well, and the last day we practised as man and woman.

‘Peter, you make a very pretty girl,’ said O’Brien.

‘But, O’Brien,’ replied I, ‘as these petticoats are not very warm, I mean to cut off my trowsers up to my knees, and wear them underneath.’

‘That’s all right,’ said O’Brien.

The next morning we made use of our stilts to cross the ditch, and carrying them in our hands we boldly set off on the high road to Malines. We met several people, gend’armes and others, but with the exception of some remarks upon my good looks, we passed unnoticed. Towards the evening we arrived at the village where we had slept in the outhouse, and as soon as we entered it, we put on our stilts, and commenced a march. When the crowd had gathered we held out our caps, and receiving nine or ten sous, we entered a cabaret. Many questions were asked us, as to where we

came from, and O'Brien answered, telling lies innumerable. I played the modest girl, and O'Brien, who stated I was his sister, appeared very careful and jealous of any attention. We slept well, and the next morning continued our route to Malines. We very often put on our stilts for practice on the road, which detained us very much, and it was not until the eighth day, without any variety or any interruption, that we arrived at Malines. As we entered the barriers we put on our stilts, and marched boldly on. The guard at the gate stopped us, not from suspicion, but to amuse themselves, and I was forced to submit to several kisses from their garlic lips, before we were allowed to enter the town. We again mounted on our stilts, for the guard had forced us to dismount, or they could not have kissed me, every now and then imitating a dance, until we arrived at the *grande place*, where we stopped opposite the hotel, and commenced a sort of waltz which we had practised. The people in the hotel looked out of the window to see our exhibition, and when we had finished I went up to the windows with O'Brien's cap to collect money. What was my surprise to perceive Colonel O'Brien looking full in my face, and staring very hard at me ; what was my greater astonishment at seeing Celeste, who immediately recognized me, and ran back to the sofa in the room, putting her hands up to her eyes, and crying out, *C'est lui, c'est lui !* Fortunately O'Brien was close to me, or I should have fallen, but he supported me. ' Peter, ask the crowd

for money, or you are lost.' I did so, and collecting some pence, then asked him what I should do. 'Go back to the window—you can then judge of what will happen.' I returned to the window; Colonel O'Brien had disappeared, but Celeste was there, as if waiting for me. I held out the cap to her, and she thrust her hand into it. The cap sunk with the weight. I took out a purse, which I kept closed in my hand, and put it into my bosom. Celeste then retired from the window, and when she had gone to the back of the room kissed her hand to me, and went out at the door. I remained stupefied for a moment, but O'Brien roused me, and we quitted the *grande place*, taking up our quarters at a little cabaret. On examining the purse, I found fifty napoleons in it; these must have been obtained from her father. I cried over them with delight. O'Brien was also much affected at the kindness of the colonel. 'He's a real O'Brien, every inch of him,' said he; 'even this cursed country can't spoil the breed.'

At the cabaret where we stopped, we were informed, that the officer who was at the hotel had been appointed to the command of the strong fort of Bergen-op-Zoom, and was proceeding thither.

'We must not chance to meet him again, if possible,' said O'Brien; 'it would be treading too close upon the heels of his duty. Neither will it do to appear on stilts among the dikes; so, Peter, we'll just stump on clear of this town, and then we'll trust to our wits.'

We walked out of the town early in the

morning, after O'Brien had made purchases of some of the clothes usually worn by the peasantry. When within a few miles of St. Nicholas, we threw away our stilts and the clothes which we had on, and dressed ourselves in those O'Brien had purchased. O'Brien had not forgot to provide us with two large brown-coloured blankets, which we strapped on to our shoulders, as the soldiers do their coats.

'But what are we to pass for now, O'Brien?'

'Peter, I will settle that point before night. My wits are working, but I like to trust to chance for a stray idea or so; we must walk fast, or we shall be smothered with the snow.'

It was bitter cold weather, and the snow had fallen heavily during the whole day; but although nearly dusk, there was a bright moon ready for us. We walked very fast, and soon observed persons ahead of us. 'Let us overtake them, we may obtain some information.' As we came up with them, one of them (they were both lads of seventeen to eighteen) said to O'Brien, 'I thought we were the last, but I was mistaken. How far is it now to St. Nicholas?'

'How should I know?' replied O'Brien, 'I am a stranger in these parts as well as yourself.'

'From what part of France do you come?' demanded the other, his teeth chattering with the cold, for he was badly clothed, and with little defence from the inclement weather.

'From Montpellier,' replied O'Brien.

'And I from Toulouse. A sad change, comrade, from olives and vines to such a climate

as this. Curse the conscription : I intended to have taken a little wife next year.'

O'Brien gave me a push, as if to say, 'Here's something that will do,' and then continued :

'And curse the conscription I say too, for I had just married, and now my wife is left to be annoyed by the attention of the *fermier général*. But it can't be helped. *C'est pour la France et pour la gloire.*'

'We shall be too late to get a billet,' replied the other, 'and not a sous have I in my pockets. I doubt if I get up with the main body till they are at Flushing. By our route, they are at Axel to-day.'

'If we arrive at St. Nicholas we shall do well,' replied O'Brien ; 'but I have a little money left, and I'll not see a comrade want a supper or a bed who is going to serve his country. You can repay me when we meet at Flushing.'

'That I will, with thanks,' replied the Frenchman, 'and so will Jaques, here, if you will trust him.'

'With pleasure,' replied O'Brien, who then entered into a long conversation, by which he drew out from the Frenchman that a party of conscripts had been ordered to Flushing, and that they had dropped behind the main body. O'Brien passed himself off as a conscript belonging to the party, and me as his brother, who had resolved to join the army as a drummer, rather than part with him. In about an hour we arrived at St. Nicholas, and after some difficulty obtained entrance into a cabaret. '*Vive la France !*' said O'Brien, going up to the

fire, and throwing the snow off his hat. In a short time we were seated to a good supper and very tolerable wine, the hostess sitting down by us, and listening to the true narratives of the real conscripts, and the false one of O'Brien. After supper the conscript who first addressed us pulled out his printed paper, with the route laid down, and observed that we were two days behind the others. O'Brien read it over, and laid it on the table, at the same time calling for more wine, having already pushed it round very freely. We did not drink much ourselves, but plied them hard, and at last the conscript commenced the whole history of his intended marriage and his disappointment, tearing his hair, and crying now and then. 'Never mind,' interrupted O'Brien, every two or three minutes, '*buvons un autre coup pour la gloire !*' and thus he continued to make them both drink until they reeled away to bed, forgetting their printed paper, which O'Brien had some time before slipped away from the table. We also retired to our room, when O'Brien observed to me, 'Peter, this description is as much like me as I am to old Nick : but that's of no consequence, as nobody goes willingly as a conscript, and therefore they will never have a doubt but that it is all right. We must be off early tomorrow, while these good people are in bed, and steal a long march upon them. I consider that we are now safe as far as Flushing.'

CHAPTER XXIV

What occurred at Flushing, and what occurred when we got out of Flushing.

AN hour before daybreak we started ; the snow was thick on the ground, but the sky was clear, and without any difficulty or interruption we passed through the towns of Axel and Halst, arrived at Terneuse on the fourth day, and went over to Flushing in company with about a dozen more stragglers from the main body. As we landed, the guard asked us whether we were conscripts. O'Brien replied that he was, and held out his paper. They took his name, or rather that of the person it belonged to, down in a book, and told him that he must apply to the *état major* before three o'clock. We passed on, delighted with our success, and then O'Brien pulled out the letter which had been given to him by the woman of the cabaret who had offered to assist me to escape when O'Brien passed off as a gend'arme, and reading the address, demanded his way to the street. We soon found out the house and entered.

' Conscripts ! ' said the woman of the house, looking at O'Brien ; ' I am billeted full already. It must be a mistake. Where is your order ? '

' Read,' said O'Brien, handing her the letter.

She read the letter, and putting it into her neckerchief, desired him to follow her. O'Brien

beckoned me to come, and we went into a small room. 'What can I do for you?' said the woman; 'I will do all in my power; but, alas! you will march from here in two or three days.'

'Never mind,' replied O'Brien, 'we will talk the matter over by-and-by, but at present only oblige us by letting us remain in this little room; we do not wish to be seen.'

'*Comment donc!*—you a conscript, and not wish to be seen! Are you, then, intending to desert?'

'Answer me one question; you have read that letter, do you intend to act up to its purport, as your sister requests?'

'As I hope for mercy I will, if I suffer everything. She is a dear sister, and would not write so earnestly if she had not strong reasons. My house and everything you command are yours—can I say more?'

'But,' continued O'Brien, 'suppose I did intend to desert, would you then assist me?'

'At my peril,' replied the woman; 'have you not assisted my family when in difficulty?'

'Well, then, I will not at present detain you from your business; I have heard you called several times. Let us have dinner when convenient, and we will remain here.'

'If I have any knowledge of phiz—*what d'ye call it,*' observed O'Brien, after she left us, 'there is honesty in that woman, and I must trust her, but not yet; we must wait till the conscripts have gone.' I agreed with O'Brien, and we remained talking until an

hour afterwards, when the woman brought us our dinner.

‘What is your name?’ inquired O’Brien.

‘Louise Eustache; you might have read it on the letter.’

‘Are you married?’

‘O yes, these six years. My husband is seldom at home; he is a Flushing pilot. A hard life, harder even than that of a soldier. Who is this lad?’

‘He is my brother, who, if I go as a soldier, intends to volunteer as a drummer.’

‘*Pauvre enfant ! c’est dommage.*’

The cabaret was full of conscripts and other people, so that the hostess had enough to do. At night we were shown by her into a small bedroom, adjoining the room we occupied. ‘You are quite alone here; the conscripts are to muster to-morrow, I find, in the *Place d’Armes*, at two o’clock: do you intend to go?’

‘No,’ replied O’Brien: ‘they will think that I am behind. It is of no consequence.’

‘Well,’ replied the woman, ‘do as you please, you may trust me; but I am so busy, without any one to assist me, that until they leave the town, I can hardly find time to speak to you.’

‘That will be soon enough, my good hostess,’ replied O’Brien: ‘*au revoir.*’

The next evening, the woman came in, in some alarm, stating that a conscript had arrived whose name had been given in before, and that the person who had given it in, had not mustered at the place. That the conscript had declared, that his pass had been stolen from him

by a person with whom he had stopped at St. Nicholas, and that there were orders for a strict search to be made through the town, as it was known that some English officers had escaped, and it was supposed that one of them had obtained the pass. 'Surely you're not English?' inquired the woman, looking earnestly at O'Brien.

'Indeed, but I am, my dear,' replied O'Brien: 'and so is this lad with me; and the favour which your sister requires is, that you help us over the water, for which service there are one hundred louis ready to be paid upon delivery of us.'

'Oh, mon Dieu! mais c'est impossible.'

'Impossible!' replied O'Brien; 'was that the answer I gave your sister in her trouble?'

'Au moins c'est difficile.'

'That's quite another concern; but with your husband a pilot! I should think a great part of the difficulty removed.'

'My husband! I've no power over him,' replied the woman, putting the apron up to her eyes.

'But one hundred louis may have,' replied O'Brien.

'There is truth in that,' observed the woman, after a pause; 'but what am I to do, if they come to search the house?'

'Send us out of it, until you can find an opportunity to send us to England. I leave it all to you—your sister expects it from you.'

'And she shall not be disappointed, if God helps us,' replied the woman, after a short

pause ; ‘ but I fear you must leave this house and the town also to-night.’

‘ How are we to leave the town ? ’

‘ I will arrange that ; be ready at four o’clock, for the gates are shut at dusk. I must go now, for there is no time to be lost.’

‘ We are in a nice mess now, O’Brien,’ observed I, after the woman had quitted the room.

‘ Devil-a-bit, Peter ; I feel no anxiety whatever, except at leaving such good quarters.’

We packed up all our effects, not forgetting our two blankets, and waited the return of the hostess. In about an hour she entered the room. ‘ I have spoken to my husband’s sister, who lives about two miles on the road to Middelburg. She is in town now, for it is market-day, and you will be safe where she hides you. I told her, it was by my husband’s request, or she would not have consented. Here, boy, put on these clothes : I will assist you.’ Once more I was dressed as a girl, and when my clothes were on, O’Brien burst out into laughter at my blue stockings and short petticoats. ‘ *Il n’est pas mal,*’ observed the hostess, as she fixed a small cap on my head, and then tied a kerchief under my chin, which partly hid my face. O’Brien put on a great coat, which the woman handed to him, with a wide-brimmed hat. ‘ Now follow me ! ’ She led us into the street, which was thronged, till we arrived at the market-place, where she met another woman, who joined her. At the end of the market-place stood a small horse and cart, into which the strange woman and I mounted, while

O'Brien, by the directions of the landlady, led the horse through the crowd until we arrived at the barriers, where she wished us good day in a loud voice before the guard. The guard took no notice of us, and we passed safely through, and found ourselves upon a neatly-paved road, as straight as an arrow, and lined on each side with high trees and a ditch. In about an hour we stopped near to the farm-house of the woman who was in charge of us. 'Do you observe that wood?' said she to O'Brien, pointing to one about half a mile from the road. 'I dare not take you into the house, my husband is so violent against the English, who captured his schuyt, and made him a poor man, that he would inform against you immediately; but go you there, make yourself as comfortable as you can to-night, and to-morrow I will send you what you want. *Adieu! Je vous plains, pauvre enfant,*' said she, looking at me, as she drove off in the cart towards her own house.

'Peter,' said O'Brien, 'I think that her kicking us out of her house is a proof of her sincerity, and therefore I say no more about it; we have the brandy-flask to keep up our spirits. Now then for the wood, though, by the powers, I shall have no relish for any of your pic-nic parties, as they call them, for the next twelve years.'

'But, O'Brien, how can I get over this ditch in petticoats? I could hardly leap it in my own clothes.'

'You must tie your petticoats round your waist and make a good run; get over as far as you can, and I will drag you through the rest.'

‘But you forget that we are to sleep in the wood, and that it’s no laughing matter to get wet through, freezing so hard as it does now.’

‘Very true, Peter ; but as the snow lies so deep upon the ditch, perhaps the ice may bear. I’ll try ; if it bears me, it will not condescend to bend at your shrimp of a carcase.’

O’Brien tried the ice, which was firm, and we both walked over, and making all the haste we could, arrived at the wood, as the woman called it, but which was not more than a clump of trees of about half an acre. We cleared away the snow for about six feet round a very hollow part, and then O’Brien cut stakes and fixed them in the earth, to which we stretched one blanket. The snow being about two feet deep, there was plenty of room to creep underneath the blanket. We then collected all the leaves we could, beating the snow off them, and laid them at the bottom of the hole ; over the leaves we spread the other blanket, and taking our bundles in, we then stopped up with snow every side of the upper blanket, except the hole to creep in at. It was quite astonishing what a warm place this became in a short time after we had remained in it. It was almost too warm, although the weather outside was piercingly cold. After a good meal and a dose of brandy, we both fell fast asleep, but not until I had taken off my woman’s attire and resumed my own clothes. We never slept better or more warmly than we did in this hole which we had made on the ground, covered with ice and snow.

CHAPTER XXV

O'Brien parts company to hunt for provisions, and I have other company in consequence of another hunt—O'Brien pathetically mourns my death and finds me alive—We escape.

THE ensuing morning we looked out anxiously for the promised assistance, for we were not very rich in provisions, although what we had were of a very good quality. It was not until three o'clock in the afternoon that we perceived a little girl coming towards us, escorted by a large mastiff. When she arrived at the copse of trees where we lay concealed, she cried out to the dog in Dutch, who immediately scoured the wood until he came to our hiding-place, when he crouched down at the entrance, barking furiously, and putting us in no small dread, lest he should attack us ; but the little girl spoke to him again, and he remained in the same position, looking at us, wagging his tail, with his under jaw lying on the snow. She soon came up, and looking underneath, put a basket in, and nodded her head. We emptied the basket. O'Brien took out a napoleon and offered it to her ; she refused it, but O'Brien forced it into her hand, upon which she again spoke to the dog, who commenced barking so furiously at us, that we expected every moment he would fly upon us. The girl at the same

time presenting the napoleon, and pointing to the dog, I went forward and took the napoleon from her, at which she immediately silenced the enormous brute, and laughing at us, hastened away.

‘ By the powers, that’s a fine little girl ! ’ said O’Brien ; ‘ I’ll back her and her dog against any man. Well, I never had a dog set at me for giving money before, but we live and learn, Peter ; now let’s see what she brought in the basket.’ We found hard-boiled eggs, bread, and a smoked mutton-ham, with a large bottle of gin. ‘ What a nice little girl ! I hope she will often favour us with her company. I’ve been thinking, Peter, that we’re quite as well off here, as in a midshipman’s berth.’

‘ You forget that you are a lieutenant.’

‘ Well, so I did, Peter, and that’s the truth, but it’s the force of habit. Now let’s make our dinner. It’s a new-fashioned way though, of making a meal, lying down ; but, however, it’s economical, for it must take longer to swallow the victuals.’

‘ The Romans used to eat their meals lying down, so I have read, O’Brien.’

‘ I can’t say that I ever heard it mentioned in Ireland, but that don’t prove that it was not the case ; so, Peter, I’ll take your word for it. Murder ! how fast it snows again. I wonder what my father’s thinking on just at this moment.’

This observation of O’Brien induced us to talk about our friends and relations in England, and after much conversation we fell fast asleep.

The next morning we found the snow had fallen about eight inches, and weighed down our upper blanket so much, that we were obliged to go out and cut stakes to support it up from the inside. While we were thus employed, we heard a loud noise and shouting, and perceived several men, apparently armed and accompanied with dogs, running straight in the direction of the wood where we were encamped. We were much alarmed, thinking that they were in search of us, but on a sudden they turned off in another direction, continuing with the same speed as before. 'What could it be?' said I to O'Brien. 'I can't exactly say, Peter; but I should think that they were hunting something, and the only game that I think likely to be in such a place as this are otters.' I was of the same opinion. We expected the little girl, but she did not come, and after looking out for her till dark, we crawled into our hole and supped upon the remainder of our provisions.

The next day, as may be supposed, we were very anxious for her arrival, but she did not appear at the time expected. Night again came on, and we went to bed without having any sustenance, except a small piece of bread that was left, and some gin which was remaining in the flask. 'Peter,' said O'Brien, 'if she don't come again to-morrow, I'll try what I can do; for I've no idea of our dying of hunger here, like the two babes in the wood, and being found covered up with dead leaves. If she does not appear at three o'clock, I'm off for provisions,

and I don't see much danger, for in this dress I look as much of a boor as any man in Holland.'

We passed an uneasy night, as we felt convinced, either that the danger was so great that they dare not venture to assist us, or, that being overruled, they had betrayed us, and left us to manage how we could. The next morning I climbed up the only large tree in the copse and looked round, especially in the direction of the farm-house belonging to the woman who had pointed out to us our place of concealment ; but nothing was to be seen but one vast tract of flat country covered with snow, and now and then a vehicle passing at a distance on the Middelburg road. I descended, and found O'Brien preparing for a start. He was very melancholy, and said to me, ' Peter, if I am taken, you must, at all risks, put on your girl's clothes and go to Flushing to the cabaret. The women there, I am sure, will protect you, and send you back to England. I only want two napoleons ; take all the rest, you will require them. If I am not back by to-night, set off for Flushing to-morrow morning.' O'Brien waited some time longer, talking with me, and it then being past four o'clock, he shook me by the hand, and, without speaking, left the wood. I never felt miserable during the whole time since we were first put into prison at Toulon, till that moment, and, when he was a hundred yards off, I knelt down and prayed. He had been absent two hours, and it was quite dusk, when I heard a noise at a distance : it advanced every moment nearer and nearer. On a sudden, I heard a rustling

of the bushes, and hastened under the blanket, which was covered with snow, in hopes that they might not perceive the entrance ; but I was hardly there before in dashed after me an enormous wolf. I cried out, expecting to be torn to pieces every moment ; but the creature lay on his belly, his mouth wide open, his eyes glaring, and his long tongue hanging out of his mouth, and although he touched me, he was so exhausted that he did not attack me. The noise increased, and I immediately perceived that it was the hunters in pursuit of him. I had crawled in feet first, the wolf ran in head-foremost, so that we lay head and tail. I crept out as fast as I could, and perceived men and dogs not two hundred yards off in full chase. I hastened to the large tree, and had not ascended six feet when they came up ; the dogs flew to the hole, and in a very short time the wolf was killed. The hunters being too busy to observe me, I had, in the meantime, climbed up the trunk of the tree, and hid myself as well as I could. Being not fifteen yards from them, I heard their expressions of surprise as they lifted up the blanket and dragged out the dead wolf, which they carried away with them ; their conversation being in Dutch, I could not understand it, but I was certain that they made use of the word '*English.*' The hunters and dogs quitted the copse, and I was about to descend, when one of them returned, and pulling up the blankets, rolled them together and walked away with them. Fortunately he did not perceive our bundles by the

little light given by the moon. I waited a short time and then came down. What to do I knew not. If I did not remain and O'Brien returned, what would he think? If I did, I should be dead with cold before the morning. I looked for our bundles, and found that in the conflict between the dogs and the wolf, they had been buried among the leaves. I recollected O'Brien's advice, and dressed myself in the girl's clothes, but I could not make up my mind to go to Flushing. So I resolved to walk towards the farm-house, which being close to the road, would give me a chance of meeting with O'Brien. I soon arrived there, and prowled round it for some time, but the doors and windows were all fast, and I dared not knock, after what the woman had said about her husband's inveteracy to the English. At last, as I looked round and round, quite at a loss what to do, I thought I saw a figure at a distance proceeding in the direction of the copse. I hastened after it and saw it enter. I then advanced very cautiously, for although I thought it might be O'Brien, yet it was possible that it was one of the men who chased the wolf, in search of more plunder. But I soon heard O'Brien's voice, and I hastened towards him. I was close to him without his perceiving me, and found him sitting down with his face covered up in his two hands. At last he cried, 'O Pater! my poor Pater! are you taken at last? Could I not leave you for one hour in safety? O chone! why did I leave you? My poor, poor Pater! simple you were, sure

enough, and that's why I loved you ; but, Peter, I would have made a man of you, for you'd all the materials, that's the truth—and a fine man too. Where am I to look for you, Pater ? Where am I to find you, Pater ? You're fast locked up by this time, and all my trouble's gone for nothing. But I'll be locked up too, Pater. Where you are, will I be ; and if we can't go to England together, why then we'll go back to that blackguard hole at Givet together. Ochone ! Ochone !' O'Brien spoke no more, but burst into tears. I was much affected with this proof of O'Brien's sincere regard, and I came to his side, and clasped him in my arms. O'Brien stared at me,—' Who are you, you ugly Dutch frow ? ' (for he had quite forgotten the woman's dress at the moment,) but recollecting himself, he hugged me in his arms. ' Pater, you come as near to an angel's shape as you can, for you come in that of a woman, to comfort me ; for, to tell the truth, I was very much distressed at not finding you here ; and all the blankets gone to boot. What has been the matter ? ' I explained in as few words as I could.

' Well, Peter, I'm happy to find you all safe, and much happier to find that you can be trusted when I leave you, for you could not have behaved more prudently. Now I'll tell you what I did, which was not much, as it happened. I knew that there was no cabaret between us and Flushing, for I took particular notice as I came along ; so I took the road to Middelburg, and found but one, which was full

of soldiers. I passed it, and found no other. As I came back past the same cabaret, one of the soldiers came out to me, but I walked along the road. He quickened his pace, and so did I mine, for I expected mischief. At last he came up to me, and spoke to me in Dutch, to which I gave him no answer. He collared me, and then I thought it convenient to pretend that I was deaf and dumb. I pointed to my mouth with an Au—au—and then to my ears, and shook my head ; but he would not be convinced, and I heard him say something about English. I then knew that there was no time to be lost, so I first burst out into a loud laugh and stopped ; and on his attempting to force me, I kicked up his heels, and he fell on the ice with such a rap on the pate, that I doubt if he has recovered it by this time. There I left him, and have run back as hard as I could, without anything for Peter to fill his little hungry inside with. Now, Peter, what's your opinion ? for they say, that out of the mouth of babes there is wisdom ; and although I never saw anything come out of their mouths but sour milk, yet perhaps I may be more fortunate this time, for, Peter, you're but a baby.'

'Not a small one, O'Brien, although not quite so large as Fingal's *babby* that you told me the story of. My idea is this. Let us, at all hazards, go to the farm-house. They have assisted us, and may be inclined to do so again ; if they refuse, we must push on to Flushing and take our chance.'

‘ Well,’ observed O’Brien, after a pause, ‘ I think we can do no better, so let’s be off.’ We went to the farm-house, and, as we approached the door, were met by the great mastiff. I started back, O’Brien boldly advanced. ‘ He’s a clever dog, and may know us again. I’ll go, up,’ said O’Brien, not stopping while he spoke, ‘ and pat his head ; if he flies at me, I shall be no worse than I was before, for depend upon it he will not allow us to go back again.’ O’Brien by this time had advanced to the dog, who looked earnestly and angrily at him. He patted his head, the dog growled, but O’Brien put his arm round his neck, and patting him again, whistled to him, and went to the door of the farm-house. The dog followed him silently but closely. O’Brien knocked, and the door was opened by the little girl : the mastiff advanced to the girl, and then turned round, facing O’Brien, as much as to say—‘ Is he to come in ? ’ The girl spoke to the dog, and went in-doors. During her absence the mastiff laid down at the threshold. In a few seconds the woman who had brought us from Flushing came out, and desired us to enter. She spoke very good French, and told us that fortunately her husband was absent ; that the reason why we had not been supplied was, that a wolf had met her little girl returning the other day, but had been beaten off by the mastiff, and that she was afraid to allow her to go again ; that she heard the wolf had been killed this evening, and had intended her girl to have gone to us early to-morrow morning. That wolves

were hardly known in that country, but that the severe winter had brought them down to the lowlands, a very rare circumstance, occurring perhaps not once in twenty years. 'But how did you pass the mastiff?' said she; 'that has surprised my daughter and me.' O'Brien told her, upon which she said, 'that the English were really "*des braves*."' No other man had ever done the same.' So I thought, for nothing would have induced me to do it. O'Brien then told the history of the death of the wolf, with all particulars, and our intention, if we could not do better, of returning to Flushing.

'I heard that Pierre Eustache came home yesterday,' replied the woman; 'and I do think that you will be safer there than here, for they will never think of looking for you among the *casernes*, which join their cabaret.'

'Will you lend us your assistance to get in?'

'I will see what I can do. But are you not hungry?'

'About as hungry as men who have eaten nothing for two days.'

'*Mon Dieu ! c'est vrai*. I never thought it was so long, but those whose stomachs are filled forget those who are empty. God make us better and more charitable!'

She spoke to the little girl in Dutch, who hastened to load the table, which we hastened to empty. The little girl stared at our voracity; but at last she laughed out, and clapped her hands at every fresh mouthful which we took, and pressed us to eat more. She allowed me to kiss her, until her mother told her that I was

not a woman, when she pouted at me, and beat me off. Before midnight we were fast asleep upon the benches before the kitchen fire, and at daybreak were roused up by the woman, who offered us some bread and spirits ; and then we went out to the door, where we found the horse and cart all ready, and loaded with vegetables for the market. The woman, the little girl, and myself got in, O'Brien leading as before, and the mastiff following. We had learnt the dog's name, which was *Achille*, and he seemed to be quite fond of us. We passed the dreaded barriers without interruption, and in ten minutes entered the cabaret of Eustache ; and immediately walked into the little room through a crowd of soldiers, two of whom chucked me under the chin. Who should we find there but Eustache, the pilot himself, in conversation with his wife ; and it appeared that they were talking about us, she insisting, and he unwilling to have any hand in the business. ' Well, here they are themselves, Eustache : the soldiers who have seen them come in will never believe that this is their first entry, if you give them up. I leave them to make their own bargain ; but mark me, Eustache, I have slaved night and day in this cabaret for your profit ; if you do not oblige me and my family, I no longer keep a cabaret for you.'

Madame Eustache then quitted the room with her husband's sister and little girl, and O'Brien immediately accosted him. ' I promise you,' said he to Eustache, ' one hundred

louis if you put us on shore at any part of England, or on board of any English man-of-war ; and if you do it within a week, I will make it twenty louis more.' O'Brien then pulled out the fifty napoleons given us by Celeste, for our own were not yet expended, and laid them on the table. ' Here is this in advance, to prove my sincerity. Say, is it a bargain or not ? '

' I never yet heard of a poor man who could withstand his wife's arguments, backed with one hundred and twenty louis,' said Eustache smiling, and sweeping the money off the table.

' I presume you have no objection to start to-night ? That will be ten louis more in your favour,' replied O'Brien.

' I shall earn them,' replied Eustache ; ' the sooner I am off the better, for I could not long conceal you here. The young frow with you is, I suppose, your companion that my wife mentioned. He has begun to suffer hardships early. Come, now sit down and talk, for nothing can be done till dark.'

O'Brien narrated the adventures attending our escape, at which Eustache laughed heartily; the more so, at the mistake which his wife was under, as to the obligations of the family. ' If I did not feel inclined to assist you before, I do now, just for the laugh I shall have at her when I come back, and if she wants any more assistance for the sake of her relations, I shall remind her of this anecdote ; but she's a good woman and a good wife to boot, only too fond of her sisters.' At dusk he equipped us both in sailor's jackets and trowsers, and desired us to

follow him boldly. He passed the guard, who knew him well. 'What, to sea already?' said one. 'You have quarrelled with your wife.' At which they all laughed, and we joined. We gained the beach, jumped into his little boat, pulled off to his vessel, and, in a few minutes, were under weigh. With a strong tide and a fair wind we were soon clear of the Scheldt, and the next morning a cutter hove in sight. We steered for her, ran under her lee, O'Brien hailed for a boat, and Eustache, receiving my bill for the remainder of his money, wished us success ; we shook hands, and in a few minutes found ourselves once more under the British pennant.

CHAPTER XXVI

Adventures at home—I am introduced to my grandfather—He obtains employment for O'Brien and myself, and we join a frigate.

As soon as we were on the deck of the cutter, the lieutenant commanding her inquired of us, in a consequential manner, who we were. O'Brien replied that we were English prisoners who had escaped. 'Oh, midshipmen, I presume,' replied the lieutenant; 'I heard that some had contrived to get away.'

'My name, sir,' said O'Brien, 'is Lieutenant O'Brien; and if you'll send for a Steel's List, I will have the honour of pointing it out to you. This young gentleman is Mr. Peter Simple, midshipman, and grandson to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Privilege.'

The lieutenant, who was a little snub-nosed man, with a pimply face, then altered his manner towards us, and begged we would step down into the cabin, where he offered what perhaps was the greatest of all luxuries to us, some English cheese and bottled porter. 'Pray,' said he, 'did you see anything of one of my officers, who was taken prisoner when I was sent with despatches to the Mediterranean fleet?'

'May I first ask the name of your lively little craft?' said O'Brien.

‘The Snapper,’ replied the lieutenant.

‘Och, murder ! sure enough we met him. He was sent to Verdun, but we had the pleasure of his company *en route* as far as Montpelier. A remarkably genteel, well dressed young man, was he not ?’

‘Why, I can’t say much about his gentility ; indeed, I am not much of a judge. As for his dress, he ought to have dressed well, but he never did when on board of me. His father is my tailor, and I took him as midshipman, just to square an account between us.’

‘That’s exactly what I thought,’ replied O’Brien.

He did not say any more, which I was glad of, as the lieutenant might not have been pleased at what had occurred.

‘When do you expect to run into port ?’ demanded O’Brien ; for we were rather anxious to put our feet ashore again in old England. The lieutenant replied that his cruise was nearly up ; and he considered our arrival quite sufficient reason for him to run in directly, and that he intended to put his helm up after the people had had their dinner. We were much delighted with this intelligence, and still more to see the intention put into execution half-an-hour afterwards.

In three days we anchored at Spithead, and went on shore with the lieutenant to report ourselves to the admiral. Oh ! with what joy did I first put my foot on the shingle beach at Sallyport, and then hasten to the post-office to put in a long letter which I had written to my

mother. We did not go to the admiral's, but merely reported ourselves at the admiral's office ; for we had no clothes fit to appear in. But we called at Meredith's the tailor, and he promised that, by the next morning, we should be fitted complete. We then ordered new hats, and everything we required, and went to the Fountain Inn. O'Brien refused to go to the Blue Posts, as being only a receptacle for midshipmen. By eleven o'clock the next morning, we were fit to appear before the admiral, who received us very kindly, and requested our company to dinner. As I did not intend setting off for home until I had received an answer from my mother, we, of course, accepted the invitation.

There was a large party of naval officers and ladies, and O'Brien amused them very much during dinner. When the ladies left the room, the admiral's wife told me to come up with them ; and when we arrived at the drawing-room, the ladies all gathered round me, and I had to narrate the whole of my adventures, which very much entertained and interested them. The next morning I received a letter from my mother—such a kind one ! entreating me to come home as fast as I could, and bring my *preserver* O'Brien with me. I showed it to O'Brien, and asked him whether he would accompany me.

‘ Why, Peter, my boy, I have a little business of some importance to transact ; which is, to obtain my arrears of pay, and some prize-money which I find due. When I have settled

that point, I will go to town to pay my respects to the First Lord of the Admiralty, and then I think I will go and see your father and mother : for, until I know how matters stand, and whether I shall be able to go with spare cash in my pocket, I do not wish to see my own family ; so write down your address here, and you'll be sure I'll come, if it is only to square my accounts with you, for I am not a little in your debt.'

I cashed a check sent by my father, and set off in the mail that night ; the next evening I arrived safe home. But I shall leave the reader to imagine the scene : to my mother I was always dear, and circumstances had rendered me of some importance to my father, for I was now an only son, and his prospects were very different from what they were when I left home. About a week afterwards, O'Brien joined us, having got through all his business. His first act was, to account with my father for his share of the expenses ; and he even insisted upon paying his half of the fifty napoleons given me by Celeste, which had been remitted to a banker at Paris before O'Brien's arrival, with a guarded letter of thanks from my father to Colonel O'Brien, and another from me to dear little Celeste. When O'Brien had remained with us about a week, he told me that he had about one hundred and sixty pounds in his pocket, and that he intended to go and see his friends, as he was sure that he would be welcome even to Father M'Grath. ' I mean to stay with them about a fortnight, and shall then

return and apply for employment. Now, Peter, will you like to be again under my protection ? ’

‘ O’Brien, I will never quit you or your ship, if I can help it.’

‘ Spoken like a sensible Peter. Well, then, I was promised immediate employment, and I will let you know as soon as the promise is performed.’

O’Brien took his leave of my family, who were already very partial to him, and left that afternoon for Holyhead. My father no longer treated me as a child ; indeed, it would have been an injustice if he had. I do not mean to say that I was a clever boy ; but I had seen much of the world in a short time, and could act and think for myself. He often talked to me about his prospects, which were very different from what they were when I left him. My two uncles, his elder brothers, had died, the third was married and had two daughters. If he had no son, my father would succeed to the title. The death of my elder brother Tom had brought me next in succession. My grandfather, Lord Privilege, who had taken no more notice of my father than occasionally sending him a basket of game, had latterly often invited him to the house, and had even requested, *some day or another*, to see his wife and family. He had also made a handsome addition to my father’s income, which the death of my two uncles had enabled him to do. Against all this, my uncle’s wife was reported to be again in the family way. I cannot say that I was pleased when my father used to speculate upon

these chances so often as he did. I thought, not only as a man, but more particularly as a clergyman, he was much to blame ; but I did not then know so much of the world. We had not heard from O'Brien for two months, when a letter arrived, stating that he had seen his family, and had bought a few acres of land, which had made them all quite happy, and had quitted with Father M'Grath's double blessing, with unlimited absolution ; that he had now been a month in town trying for employment, but found that he could not obtain it, although one promise was backed up by another.

A few days after this, my father received a note from Lord Privilege, requesting he would come and spend a few days with him, and bring his son Peter, who had escaped from the French prison. Of course, this was an invitation not to be neglected, and we accepted it forthwith. I must say, I felt rather in awe of my grandfather ; he had kept the family at such a distance, that I had always heard his name mentioned more with reverence than with any feeling of kindred, but I was a little wiser now. We arrived at Eagle Park, a splendid estate, where he resided, and were received by a dozen servants in and out of livery, and ushered into his presence.

He was in his library, a large room, surrounded with handsome bookcases, sitting on an easy chair. A more venerable, placid old gentleman I never beheld ; his grey hairs hung down on each side of his temples, and were

collected in a small *queue* behind. He rose and bowed, as we were announced ; to my father he held out *two* fingers in salutation, to me only *one* ; but there was an elegance in the manner in which it was done which was indescribable. He waved his hand to chairs, placed by the *gentleman* out of livery, and requested we would be seated. I could not at the time help thinking of Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, and his remarks upon high breeding, which were so true ; and I laughed to myself when I recollected that Mr. Chucks had once dined with him. As soon as the servants had quitted the room, the distance on the part of my grandfather appeared to wear off. He interrogated me on several points, and seemed pleased with my replies ; but he always called me ‘child.’ After a conversation of half-an-hour, my father rose, saying that his lordship must be busy, and that we would go over the grounds till dinner-time. My grandfather rose, and we took a sort of formal leave ; but it was not a formal leave after all, it was high breeding, respecting yourself and respecting others. For my part, I was pleased with the first interview, and so I told my father after we had left the room. ‘My dear Peter,’ replied he, ‘your grandfather has one idea which absorbs most others—the peerage, the estate, and the descent of it in the right line. As long as your uncles were alive, we were not thought of, as not being in the line of descent ; nor should we now, but that your uncle William has only daughters. Still we are not looked upon as actual, but only

contingent, inheritors of the title. Were your uncle to die to-morrow, the difference in his behaviour would be manifested immediately.'

'That is to say, instead of *two fingers* you would receive the *whole* hand, and instead of *one*, I should obtain promotion to *two*.'

At this my father laughed heartily, saying, 'Peter, you have exactly hit the mark. I cannot imagine how we ever could have been so blind as to call you the fool of the family.'

To this I made no reply, for it was difficult so to do without depreciating others or depreciating myself: but I changed the subject by commenting on the beauties of the park, and the splendid timber with which it was adorned. 'Yes, Peter,' replied my father, with a sigh, 'thirty-five thousand a-year in land, money in the funds, and timber worth at least forty thousand more, are not to be despised. But God wills everything.' After this remark, my father appeared to be in deep thought, and I did not interrupt him.

We stayed ten days with my grandfather, during which he would often detain me for two hours after breakfast, listening to my adventures, and I really believe was very partial to me. The day before I went away he said, 'Child, you are going to-morrow; now tell me what you would like, as I wish to give you a token of regard. Don't be afraid; what shall it be—a watch and seals, or—anything you most fancy?'

'My Lord,' replied I, 'if you wish to do me a favour, it is, that you will apply to the First

Lord of the Admiralty to appoint Lieutenant O'Brien to a fine frigate, and, at the same time, ask for a vacancy as midshipman for me.'

'O'Brien!' replied his lordship; 'I recollect it was he who accompanied you from France, and appears, by your account, to have been a true friend. I am pleased with your request, my child, and it shall be granted.'

His lordship then desired me to hand him the paper and inkstandish, wrote by my directions, sealed the letter, and told me he would send me the answer. The next day we quitted Eagle Park, his lordship wishing my father good-bye with *two* fingers, and to me extending *one*, as before; but he said, 'I am pleased with you, child; you may write occasionally.'

When we were on our route home, my father observed that 'I had made more progress with my grandfather than he had known any one to do, since he could recollect. His saying that you might write to him is at least ten thousand pounds to you in his will, for he never deceives any one, or changes his mind.' My reply was, that I should like to see the ten thousand pounds, but that I was not so sanguine.

A few days after our return home, I received a letter and enclosure from Lord Privilege, the contents of which were as follow:

'My dear Child,—I send you Lord ——'s answer, which I trust will prove satisfactory. My compliments to your family.

'Yours, &c.

'PRIVILEGE.'

The enclosure was a handsome letter from the First Lord, stating that he had appointed O'Brien to the Sanglier frigate, and had ordered me to be received on board as midshipman. I was delighted to forward this letter to O'Brien's address, who in a few days sent me an answer, thanking me, and stating that he had received his appointment, and that I need not join for a month, which was quite time enough, as the ship was refitting : but, that if my family were tired of me, which was sometimes the case in the best regulated families, why, then I should learn something of my duty by coming to Portsmouth. He concluded by sending his kind regards to all the family, and his *love* to my grandfather, which last I certainly did not forward in my letter of thanks. About a month afterwards I received a letter from O'Brien, stating that the ship was ready to go out of harbour, and would be anchored off Spithead in a few days.

CHAPTER XXVII

Captain and Mrs. To—Pork—We go to Plymouth and fall in with our old Captain.

I IMMEDIATELY took leave of my family, and set off for Portsmouth, and in two days arrived at the Fountain Inn, where O'Brien was waiting to receive me. ' Peter, my boy, I feel so much obliged to you, that if your uncle won't go out of the world by fair means, I'll pick a quarrel with him, and shoot him, on purpose that you may be a lord, as I am determined that you shall be. Now come up into my room, where we'll be all alone, and I'll tell you all about the ship and our new captain. In the first place, we'll begin with the ship, as the most important personage of the two : she's a beauty. I forget her name before she was taken, but the French know how to build ships better than keep them. She's now called the Sanglier, which means a wild pig, and, by the powers ! a *pig* ship she is, as you will hear directly. The captain's name is a very short one, and wouldn't please Mr. Chucks, consisting only of two letters, T and O, which makes, To ; his whole title is Captain John To. It would almost appear as if somebody had broken off the better half of his name, and only left him the commencement of it ; but, however, it's a handy name to sign when he pays off his ship. And now I'll tell you what

sort of a looking craft he is. He's built like a Dutch schuyt, great breadth of beam, and very square tuck. He applied to have the quarter galleries enlarged in the two last ships he commanded. He weighs about eighteen stone, rather more than less. He is a good-natured sort of a chap, amazingly ungenteeled, not much of an officer, not much of a sailor, but a devilish good hand at the trencher. But he's only a part of the concern ; he has his wife on board, who is a red-herring sort of a lady, and very troublesome to boot. What makes her still more annoying is, that she has a *piano* on board, very much out of *tune*, on which she plays very much out of *time*. Holystoning is music compared with her playing. Even the captain's spaniel howls when she comes to the high notes ; but she affects the fine lady, and always treats the officers with music when they dine in the cabin, which makes them very glad to get out of it.'

' But, O'Brien, I thought wives were not permitted on board.'

' Very true, but there's the worst part in the man's character : he knows that he is not allowed to take his wife to sea, and, in consequence, he never says she *is* his wife, or presents her on shore to anybody. If any of the other captains ask how Mrs. To is to-day, " Why," he replies, " pretty well, I thank you " ; but at the same time he gives a kind of smirk, as if to say, " She is not my wife " ; and although everybody knows that she is, yet he prefers that they should think otherwise, rather than be at the expense of keeping her on shore ; for you know,

Peter, that although there are regulations about wives, there are none with regard to other women.'

'But does his wife know this?' inquired I.

'I believe, from my heart, she is a party to the whole transaction, for report says, that she would skin a flint if she could. She's always trying for presents from the officers, and, in fact, she commands the ship.'

'Really, O'Brien, this is not a very pleasant prospect.'

'Whist! wait a little; now I come to the wind-up. This Captain To is very partial to pig's *mate*, and we have as many live pigs on board as we have pigs of ballast. The first lieutenant is right mad about them. At the same time he allows no pigs but his own on board, that there may be no confusion. The manger is full of pigs: there are two cow-pens between the main-deck guns, drawn from the dock-yard, and converted into pig-pens. The two sheep-pens amidships are full of pigs, and the geese and turkey-coops are divided off into apartments for four *sows* in the *family way*. Now, Peter, you see there's little or no expense in keeping pigs on board of a large frigate, with so much *pay-soup* and whole peas for them to eat, and this is the reason why he keeps them, for the devil a bit of any other stock has he on board. I presume he means to *milk* one of the *old sows* for breakfast when the ship sails. The first thing that he does in the morning, is to go round to his pigs with the butcher, feeling one, scratching the dirty ears of another, and then

he classes them—his *bacon* pigs, his *porkers*, his *breeding* sows, and so on. The old boar is still at the stables of this inn, but I hear he is to come on board with the sailing orders ; but he is very savage, and is therefore left on shore to the very last moment. Now really, Peter, what with the squealing of the pigs and his wife's piano we are almost driven mad. I don't know which is the worse of the two ; if you go aft you hear the one, if you go forward you hear the other, by way of variety, and that, they say, is charming. But, is it not shocking that such a beautiful frigate should be turned into a pigsty, and that her main-deck should smell worse than a muck-heap ? ’

‘ But how does his wife like the idea of living only upon hog's flesh ? ’

‘ She ! Lord bless you, Peter ! why, she looks as spare as a shark, and she has just the appetite of one ; for she'll *bolt* a four-pound piece of pork before it's well put on her plate.’

‘ Have you any more such pleasant intelligence to communicate, O'Brien ? ’

‘ No, Peter ; you have the worst of it. The lieutenants are good officers, and pleasant messmates ; the doctor is a little queer, and the purser thinks himself a wag ; the master, an old north-countryman, who knows his duty, and takes his glass of grog. The midshipmen are a very genteel set of young men, and full of fun and frolic. I'll bet a wager there'll be a bobbery in the pig-sty before long, for they are ripe for mischief. Now, Peter, I hardly need say that my cabin and everything I have is at

your service ; and I think if we could only have a devil of a gale of wind, or a hard-fought action, to send the *pigs* overboard and smash the *piano*, we should do very well.'

The next day I went on board, and was shown down into the cabin, to report my having joined. Mrs. To, a tall thin woman, was at her piano ; she rose, and asked me several questions—who my friends were—how much they allowed me a year, and many other questions, which I thought impertinent : but a captain's wife is allowed to take liberties. She then asked me if I was fond of music ? That was a difficult question, as, if I said that I was, I should in all probability be obliged to hear it ; if I said that I was not, I might have created a dislike in her. So I replied, that I was very fond of music on shore, when it was not interrupted by other noise. ' Ah ! then I perceive you are a real amateur, Mr. Simple,' replied the lady.

Captain To then came out of the after-cabin, half-dressed. ' Well, youngster, so you've joined at last. Come and dine with us to-day : and, as you go down to your berth, desire the sentry to pass the word for the butcher ; I want to speak with him.'

I bowed and retired. I was met in the most friendly manner by the officers and by my own messmates, who had been prepossessed in my favour by O'Brien, previous to my arrival. In our service you always find young men of the best families on board large frigates, they being considered the most eligible class of vessels ; I

found my messmates to be gentlemen, with one or two exceptions, but I never met so many wild young lads together. I sat down and ate some dinner with them, although I was to dine in the cabin, for the sea air made me hungry.

‘Don’t you dine in the cabin, Simple?’ said the caterer.

‘Yes,’ replied I.

‘Then don’t eat any pork, my boy, now, for you’ll have plenty there. Come, gentlemen, fill your glasses; we’ll drink happiness to our new messmate, and pledging him, we pledge ourselves to try to promote it.’

‘I’ll just join you in that toast,’ said O’Brien, walking into the midshipman’s berth. ‘What is it you’re drinking it in?’

‘Some of Collier’s port, sir. Boy, bring a glass for Mr. O’Brien.’

‘Here’s your health, Peter, and wishing you may keep out of a French prison this cruise. Mr. Montague, as caterer, I beg you will order another candle, that I may see what’s on the table, and then perhaps I may find something I should like to pick a bit off.’

‘Here’s the fag end of a leg of mutton, Mr. O’Brien, and there’s a piece of boiled pork.’

‘Then I’ll just trouble you for a bit close to the knuckle. Peter, you dine in the cabin, so do I—the doctor refused.’

‘Have you heard when we sail, Mr. O’Brien?’ inquired one of my messmates.

‘I heard at the admiral’s office, that we were expected to be ordered round to Plymouth, and receive our orders there, either for the East or

West Indies, they thought ; and, indeed, the stores we have taken on board indicate that we are going foreign, but the captain's signal is just made, and probably the admiral has intelligence to communicate.'

In about an hour afterwards, the captain returned, looking very red and hot. He called the first lieutenant aside from the rest of the officers, who were on deck to receive him, and told him, that we were to start for Plymouth the next morning ; and the admiral had told him confidentially, that we were to proceed to the West Indies with a convoy, which was then collecting. He appeared to be very much alarmed at the idea of going to make a feast for the land-crabs ; and certainly, his gross habit of body rendered him very unfit for the climate. This news was soon spread through the ship, and there was of course no little bustle and preparation. The doctor, who had refused to dine in the cabin, upon plea of being unwell, sent up to say, that he felt himself so much better, that he should have great pleasure in attending the summons, and he joined the first lieutenant, O'Brien, and me, as we walked in. We sat down to table ; the covers were removed, and, as the midshipmen prophesied, there was plenty of *pork*—mock-turtle soup, made out of a pig's head—a boiled leg of pork and peas-pudding—a roast sparerib, with the crackling on—sausages and potatoes, and pig's pettitoes. I cannot say that I disliked my dinner, and I ate very heartily ; but a roast sucking-pig came on as a second course, which

rather surprised me : but what surprised me more, was the quantity devoured by Mrs. To. She handed her plate from the boiled pork to the roast, asked for some pettitoes, tried the sausages, and finished with a whole plateful of sucking-pig and stuffing. We had an apple pie at the end, but as we had already eaten applesauce with the roast pork, we did not care for it. The doctor, who abominated pork, ate pretty well, and was excessively attentive to Mrs. To.

‘ Will you not take a piece of the roast pig, doctor ? ’ said the captain.

‘ Why really, Captain To, as we are bound, by all reports, to a station where we must not venture upon pork, I think I will not refuse to take a piece, for I am very fond of it.’

‘ How do you mean ? ’ inquired the captain and his lady, both in a breath.

‘ Perhaps I may be wrongly informed,’ replied the doctor ; ‘ but I have heard that we were ordered to the West Indies ; now, if so, every one knows, that although you may eat salt pork there occasionally without danger, in all tropical climates, and especially the West Indies, two or three days’ living upon this meat will immediately produce dysentery, which is always fatal in that climate.’

‘ Indeed ! ’ exclaimed the captain.

‘ You don’t say so ! ’ rejoined the lady.

‘ I do indeed : and have always avoided the West Indies for that very reason—I am so fond of pork.’

The doctor then proceeded to give nearly one hundred instances of messmates and shipmen

who had been attacked with dysentery, from the eating of fresh pork in the West Indies ; and O'Brien, perceiving the doctor's drift, joined him, telling some most astonishing accounts of the dreadful effects of pork in a hot country. I think he said, that when the French were blockaded, previous to the surrender of Martinique, that, having nothing but pigs to eat, thirteen hundred out of seventeen hundred soldiers and officers died in the course of three weeks, and the others were so reduced to disease, that they were obliged to capitulate. The doctor then changed the subject, and talked about the yellow fever, and other diseases of the climate ; so that by his account, the West India islands were but hospitals to die in. Those most likely to be attacked, were men in full strong health. The spare men stood a better chance. This conversation was carried on until it was time to leave—Mrs. To at last quite silent, and the captain gulping down his wine with a sigh. When we rose from table, Mrs. To did not ask us, as usual, to stay and hear a little music ; she was, like her piano, not a little out of tune.

‘ By the powers, doctor, you did that nately,’ said O'Brien, as we left the cabin.

‘ O'Brien,’ said the doctor, ‘ oblige me, and you, Mr. Simple, oblige me also, by not saying a word in the ship about what I have said ; if it once gets wind, I shall have done no good ; but if you both hold your tongues for a short time, I think I may promise you to get rid of Captain To, his wife, and his pigs.’ We per-

ceived the justice of his observation, and promised secrecy. The next morning the ship sailed for Plymouth, and Mrs. To sent for the doctor, not being very well. The doctor prescribed for her, and I believe, on my conscience, made her worse on purpose. The illness of his wife, and his own fears, brought Captain To more than usual in contact with the doctor, of whom he frequently asked his candid opinion, as to his own chance in a hot country.

‘Captain To,’ said the doctor, ‘I never would have given my opinion, if you had not asked it, for I am aware, that, as an officer, you would never flinch from your duty, to whatever quarter of the globe you may be ordered ; but, as you have asked the question, I must say, with your full habit of body, I think you would not stand a chance of living for more than two months. At the same time, sir, I may be mistaken ; but, at all events, I must point out that Mrs. To is of a very bilious habit, and I trust you will not do such an injustice to an amiable woman, as to permit her to accompany you.’

‘Thanky, doctor, I’m much obliged to you,’ replied the captain, turning round and going down the ladder to his cabin. We were then beating down the channel ; for, although we ran through the Needles with a fair wind, it fell calm, and shifted to the westward, when we were abreast of Portland. The next day the captain gave an order for a very fine pig to be killed, for he was out of provisions. Mrs. To still kept her bed, and he therefore directed that

a part should be salted, as he could have no company. I was in the midshipmen's berth, when some of them proposed that we should get possession of the pig ; and the plan they agreed upon was as follows—they were to go to the pen that night, and with a needle stuck in a piece of wood, to prick the pig all over, and then rub gunpowder into the parts wounded. This was done, and although the butcher was up a dozen times during the night to ascertain what made the pigs so uneasy, the midshipmen passed the needle from watch to watch, until the pig was well tattooed in all parts. In the morning watch it was killed, and when it had been scalded in the tub, and the hair taken off, it appeared covered with blue spots. The midshipman of the morning watch, who was on the main-deck, took care to point out to the butcher, that the pork was *measly*, to which the man unwillingly assented, stating, at the same time, that he could not imagine how it could be, for a finer pig he had never put a knife into. The circumstance was reported to the captain, who was much astonished. The doctor came in to visit Mrs. To, and the captain requested the doctor to examine the pig and give his opinion. Although this was not the doctor's province, yet, as he had great reason for keeping intimate with the captain, he immediately consented. Going forward, he met me, and I told him the secret. 'That will do,' replied he ; 'it all tends to what we wish.' The doctor returned to the captain, and said, 'that there was no doubt but that the pig was measly, which was

a complaint very frequent on board ships, particularly in hot climates, where all pork became *measly*—one great reason for its there proving so unwholesome.’ The captain sent for the first lieutenant, and, with a deep sigh, ordered him to throw the pig overboard ; but the first lieutenant, who knew what had been done from O’Brien, ordered the *master’s mate* to throw it overboard : the master’s mate, touching his hat, said, ‘ Ay, ay, sir,’ and took it down into the berth, where we cut it up, salted one half, and the other we finished before we arrived at Plymouth, which was six days from the time we left Portsmouth. On our arrival, we found part of the convoy lying there, but no orders for us ; and, to my great delight, on the following day the *Diomedé* arrived, from a cruise off the Western Islands. I obtained permission to go on board with O’Brien, and we once more greeted our messmates. Mr. Falcon, the first lieutenant, went down to Captain Savage, to say we were on board, and he requested us to come into the cabin. He greeted us warmly, and gave us great credit for the manner in which we had effected our escape. When we left the cabin, I found Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, waiting outside.

‘ My dear Mr. Simple, extend your flapper to me, for I’m delighted to see you. I long to have a long talk with you.’

‘ And I should like it also, Mr. Chucks, but I’m afraid we have not time ; I dine with Captain Savage to-day, and it only wants an hour of dinner-time.’

‘Well, Mr. Simple, I’ve been looking at your frigate, and she’s a beauty—much larger than the *Diomede*.’

‘And she behaves quite as well,’ replied I. ‘I think we are two hundred tons larger. You’ve no idea of her size until you are on her decks.’

‘I should like to be boatswain of her, Mr. Simple ; that is, with Captain Savage, for I will not part with him.’ I had some more conversation with Mr. Chucks, but I was obliged to attend to others, who interrupted us. We had a very pleasant dinner with our old captain, to whom we gave a history of our adventures, and then we returned on board.

CHAPTER XXVIII

We get rid of the pigs and piano-forte—The last boat on shore before sailing—The first lieutenant too hasty, and the consequences to me.

WE waited three days, at the expiration of which, we heard that Captain To was about to exchange with Captain Savage. We could not believe such good news to be true, and we could not ascertain the truth of the report, as the captain had gone on shore with Mrs. To, who recovered fast after she was out of our doctor's hands ; so fast, indeed, that a week afterwards, on questioning the steward, upon his return on board, how Mrs. To was, he replied, ' O charming well again, sir, she has eaten a *whole pig* since she left the ship.' But the report was true ; Captain To, afraid to go to the West Indies, had effected an exchange with Captain Savage. Captain Savage was permitted, as was the custom of the service, to bring his first lieutenant, his boatswain, and his barge's crew with him. He joined a day or two before we sailed, and never was there more joy on board : the only people miserable were the first lieutenant, and those belonging to the Sanglier, who were obliged to follow Captain To ; who, with his wife, his pigs, and her piano, were all got rid of in the course of one forenoon.

I have already described pay-day on board

of a man-of-war, but I think, that the two days before sailing are even more unpleasant ; although, generally speaking, all our money being spent, we are not sorry when we once are fairly out of harbour, and find ourselves in *blue water*. The men never work well on those days : they are thinking of their wives and sweethearts, of the pleasure they had when at liberty on shore, where they might get drunk without punishment ; and many of them are either half drunk at the time, or suffering from the effects of previous intoxication. The ship is in disorder, and crowded with the variety of stock and spare stores which are obliged to be taken on board in a hurry, and have not yet been properly secured in their places. The first lieutenant is cross, the officers are grave, and the poor midshipmen, with all their own little comforts to attend to, are harassed and driven about like post-horses. ‘ Mr. Simple,’ inquired the first lieutenant, ‘ where do you come from ? ’

‘ From the gun-wharf, sir, with the gunner’s spare blocks and breechings.’

‘ Very well—send the marines aft to clear the boat, and pipe away the first cutter. Mr. Simple, jump into the first cutter and go to Mount Wise for the officers. Be careful that none of your men leave the boat. Come, be smart.’

Now, I had been away the whole morning, and it was then half-past one, and I had had no dinner : but I said nothing, and went into the boat. As soon as I was off, O’Brien, who stood by Mr. Falcon, said, ‘ Peter was thinking of his dinner, poor fellow ! ’

‘I really quite forgot it,’ replied the first lieutenant, ‘there is so much to do. He is a willing boy, and he shall dine in the gun-room when he comes back.’ And so I did—so I lost nothing by not expostulating, and gained more of the favour of the first lieutenant, who never forgot what he called *zeal*. But the hardest trial of the whole is to the midshipman who is sent with the boat to purchase the supplies for the cabin and gun-room on the day before the ship’s sailing. It was my misfortune to be ordered upon that service this time, and that very unexpectedly. I had been ordered to dress myself to take the gig on shore for the captain’s orders, and was walking the deck with my very best uniform and side arms, when the marine officer, who was the gun-room caterer, came up to the first lieutenant, and asked him for a boat. The boat was manned, and a midshipman ordered to take charge of it ; but when he came up, the first lieutenant recollecting that he had come off two days before with only half his boat’s crew, would not trust him, and called out to me, ‘Here, Mr. Simple, I must send you in this boat ; mind you are careful that none of the men leave it ; and bring off the sergeant of marines, who is on shore looking for the men who have broken their liberty.’ Although I could not but feel proud of the compliment, yet I did not much like going in my very best uniform, and would have run down and changed it, but the marine officer and all the people were in the boat, and I could not keep it waiting, so down the side I

went, and we shoved off. We had, besides the boat's crew, the marine officer, the purser, the gun-room steward, the captain's steward, and the purser's steward ; so that we were pretty full. It blew hard from the S.E., and there was a sea running, but as the tide was flowing into the harbour there was not much bubble. We hoisted the foresail, flew before the wind and tide, and in a quarter of an hour we were at Mutton Cove, when the marine officer expressed his wish to land. The landing-place was crowded with boats, and it was not without sundry exchanges of foul words and oaths, and the bowmen dashing the points of their boat-hooks into the shore-boats, to make them keep clear of us, that we forced our way to the beach. The marine officer and all the stewards then left the boat, and I had to look after the men. I had not been there three minutes before the bowman said that his wife was on the wharf with his clothes from the wash, and begged leave to go and fetch them. I refused, telling him that she could bring them to him. 'Vy, now, Mr. Simple,' said the woman, 'arn't you a nice lady's man, to go for to axe me to muddle my way through all the dead dogs, cabbage-stalks, and stinking Hake's heads, with my bran new shoes and clean stockings?' I looked at her, and sure enough she was, as they say in France, *bien chaussée*. 'Come, Mr. Simple, let him out to come for his clothes, and you'll see that he's back in a moment.' I did not like to refuse her, as it was very dirty and wet, and the shingle was strewed with all that she had mentioned.

The bowman made a spring out with his boat-hook, threw it back, went up to his wife, and commenced talking with her, while I watched him. 'If you please, sir, there's my young woman come down, mayn't I speak to her?' said another of the men. I turned round and refused him. He expostulated, and begged very hard, but I was resolute; however, when I again turned my eyes to watch the bowman, he and his wife were gone. 'There,' says I to the coxswain, 'I knew it would be so; you see Hickman is off.'

'Only gone to take a parting glass, sir,' replied the coxswain; 'he'll be here directly.'

'I hope so; but I'm afraid not.' After this, I refused all the solicitations of the men to be allowed to leave the boat, but I permitted them to have some beer brought down to them. The gun-room steward then came back with a basket of *soft-tack*, i.e. loaves of bread, and told me that the marine officer requested I would allow two of the men to go up with him to Glencross' shop, to bring down some of the stores. Of course, I sent two of the men, and told the steward if he saw Hickman, to bring him down to the boat.

By this time many of the women belonging to the ship had assembled, and commenced a noisy conversation with the boat's crew. One brought one article for Jim, another some clothes for Bill; some of them climbed into the boat, and sat with the men—others came and went, bringing beer and tobacco, which the men desired them to purchase. The crowd,

the noise, and confusion, were so great, that it was with the utmost difficulty that I could keep my eyes on all my men, who, one after another, made an attempt to leave the boat. Just at that time came down the sergeant of marines, with three of our men whom he had picked up, *roaring drunk*. They were tumbled into the boat, and increased the difficulty, as in looking after those who were riotous, and would try to leave the boat by force, I was not so well able to keep my eyes on those who were sober. The sergeant then went up after another man, and I told him also about Hickman. About half-an-hour afterwards the steward came down with the two men, loaded with cabbages, baskets of eggs, strings of onions, crockery of all descriptions, paper parcels of groceries, legs and shoulders of mutton, which were crowded in, until not only the stern-sheets, but all under the thwarts of the boat were also crammed full. They told me that they had a few more things to bring down, and that the marine officer had gone to Stonehouse to see his wife, so that they should be down long before him. In half-an-hour more, during which I had the greatest difficulty to manage the boat's crew, they returned with a dozen geese, and two ducks, tied by the legs, but without the two men, who had given them the slip, so that there were now three men gone, and I knew Mr. Falcon would be very angry, for they were three of the smartest men in the ship. I was now determined not to run the risk of losing more men, and I ordered the boat's crew to shove off, that

I might lie at the wharf, where they could not climb up. They were very mutinous, grumbled very much, and would hardly obey me ; the fact is, they had drunk a great deal, and some of them were more than half tipsy. However, at last I was obeyed, but not without being saluted with a shower of invectives from the women, and the execrations of the men belonging to the wherries and *shore-boats* which were washed against our sides by the swell. The weather had become much worse, and looked very threatening. I waited an hour more, when the sergeant of marines came down with two more men, one of whom, to my great joy, was Hickman. This made me more comfortable, as I was not answerable for the other two ; still I was in great trouble from the riotous and insolent behaviour of the boat's crew, and the other men brought down by the sergeant of marines. One of them fell back into a basket of eggs, and smashed them all to atoms ; still the marine officer did not come down, and it was getting late. The tide being now at the ebb, running out against the wind, there was a very heavy sea, and I had to go off to the ship with a boat deeply laden, and most of the people in her in a state of intoxication. The coxswain, who was the only one who was sober, recommended our shoving off, as it would soon be dark, and some accident would happen. I reflected a minute, and agreeing with him, I ordered the oars to be got out, and we shoved off, the sergeant of marines and the gun-room steward perched up in the bows—drunken men,

ducks and geese, lying together at the bottom of the boat—the stern-sheets loaded up to the gunwale, and the other passengers and myself sitting how we could among the crockery and a variety of other articles with which the boat was crowded. It was a scene of much confusion—the half-drunken boat's crew *catching crabs*, and falling forward upon the others—those who were quite drunk swearing they *would* pull. ‘Lay on your oar, Sullivan ; you are doing more harm than good. You drunken rascal, I’ll report you as soon as we get on board.’

‘How the devil can I pull, your honour, when there’s that fellow Jones breaking the very back o’ me with his oar, and he never touching the water all the while ?’

‘You lie,’ cried Jones ; ‘I’m pulling the boat by myself against the whole of the larboard oars.’

‘He’s rowing *dry*, your honour—only making bilave.’

‘Do you call this rowing dry ?’ cried another, as a sea swept over the boat, fore and aft, wetting everybody to the skin.

‘Now your honour, just look and see if I a’n’t pulling the very arms off me ?’ cried Sullivan.

‘Is there water enough to cross the Bridge, Swinburne ?’ said I to the coxswain.

‘Plenty, Mr. Simple ; it is but quarter ebb, and the sooner we are on board the better.’

We were now past Devil’s Point, and the sea was very heavy : the boat plunged in the

trough, so that I was afraid that she would break her back. She was soon half full of water, and the two after-oars were laid in for the men to bale. 'Plase your honour, hadn't I better cut free the legs of them ducks and geese, and allow them to swim for their lives?' cried Sullivan, resting on his oar; 'the poor birds will be drowned else in their own *iliment*.'

'No, no—pull away as hard as you can.'

By this time the drunken men in the bottom of the boat began to be very uneasy, from the quantity of water which washed about them, and made several staggering attempts to get on their legs. They fell down again upon the ducks and geese, the major part of which were saved from being drowned by being suffocated. The sea on the Bridge was very heavy: and although the tide swept us out, we were nearly swamped. Soft bread was washing about the bottom of the boat; the parcels of sugar, pepper, and salt, were wet through with the salt water, and a sudden jerk threw the captain's steward, who was seated upon the gun-wale close to the after-oar, right upon the whole of the crockery and eggs, which added to the mass of destruction. A few more seas shipped completed the job, and the gun-room steward was in despair. 'That's a darling!' cried Sullivan: 'the politest boat in the whole fleet. She makes more bows and curtseys than the finest couple in the land. Give way, my lads, and work the crater stuff out of your elbows, and the first lieutenant will see us all so sober, and so wet in the bargain, and think we're all

so dry, that perhaps he'll be after giving us a raw nip when we get on board.'

In a quarter of an hour we were nearly alongside, but the men pulled so badly, and the sea was so great, that we missed the ship, and went astern. They veered out a buoy with a line, which we got hold of, and were hauled up by the marines and after-guard, the boat plunging bows under, and drenching us through and through. At last we got under the counter, and I climbed up by the stern ladder. Mr. Falcon was on deck, and very angry at the boat not coming alongside properly. 'I thought, Mr. Simple, that you knew by this time how to bring a boat alongside.'

'So I do, sir, I hope,' replied I; 'but the boat was so full of water, and the men would not give way.'

'What men has the sergeant brought on board?'

'Three, sir,' replied I, shivering with the cold, and unhappy at my very best uniform being spoiled.

'Are all your boat's crew with you, sir?'

'No, sir, there are two left on shore; they—'

'Not a word, sir. Up to the mast-head, and stay there till I call you down. If it were not so late, I would send you on shore, and not receive you on board again without the men. Up, sir, immediately.'

I did not venture to explain, but up I went. It was very cold, blowing hard from the S.E., with heavy squalls; I was so wet, that the wind appeared to blow through me, and it was

now nearly dark. I reached the cross-trees, and when I was seated there, I felt that I had done my duty, and had not been fairly treated. During this time, the boat had been hauled up alongside to clear, and a pretty clearance there was. All the ducks and geese were dead, the eggs and crockery all broke, the grocery almost all washed away ; in short, as O'Brien observed, there was 'a very pretty general average.' Mr. Falcon was still very angry ; 'Who are the men missing ?' inquired he, of Swinburne, the coxswain, as he came up the side.

'Williams and Sweetman, sir.'

'Two of the smartest topmen, I am told. It really is too provoking ; there is not a midshipman in the ship I can trust. I must work all day, and get no assistance. The service is really going to the devil now, with the young men who are sent on board to be brought up as officers, and who are above doing their duty. What made you so late, Swinburne ?'

'Waiting for the marine officer, who went to Stonehouse to see his wife ; but Mr. Simple would not wait any longer, as it was getting dark, and we had so many drunken men in the boat.'

'Mr. Simple did right. I wish Mr. Harrison would stay on shore with his wife altogether—it's really trifling with the service. Pray, Mr. Swinburne, why had not you your eyes about you, if Mr. Simple was so careless ? How came you to allow these men to leave the boat ?'

'The men were ordered up by the marine officer, to bring down your stores, sir, and they

gave the steward the slip. It was no fault of Mr. Simple's, nor of mine either. We laid off at the wharf for two hours before we started, or we should have lost more ; for what can a poor lad do, when he has charge of drunken men who *will not* obey orders ? ' And the coxswain looked up at the mast-head, as much as to say, Why is he sent there ? ' I'll take my oath, sir,' continued Swinburne, ' that Mr. Simple never put his foot out of the boat, from the time that he went over the side until he came on board ; and that no young gentleman could have done his duty more strictly.'

Mr. Falcon looked very angry at first, at the coxswain speaking so freely, but he said nothing. He took one or two turns on the deck, and then hailing the mast-head, desired me to come down. But I *could not* ; my limbs were so cramped with the wind blowing upon my wet clothes, that I could not move. He hailed again ; I heard him, but was not able to answer. One of the topmen then came up, and perceiving my condition, hailed the deck, and said he believed I was dying, for I could not move, and that he dared not leave me for fear I should fall. O'Brien, who had been on deck all the while, jumped up the rigging, and was soon at the cross-trees where I was. He sent the topman down into the top for a tail-block and the studding-sail haulyards, made a whip, and lowered me on deck. I was immediately put into my hammock ; and the surgeon ordering me some hot brandy-and-water, and plenty of blankets, in a few hours I was quite restored.

O'Brien, who was at my bedside, said, 'Never mind, Peter, and don't be angry with Mr. Falcon, for he is very sorry.'

'I am not angry, O'Brien ; for Mr. Falcon has been too kind to me not to make me forgive him for being once hasty.'

The surgeon came to my hammock, gave me some more hot drink, desired me to go to sleep, and I woke the next morning quite well.

When I came into the berth, my messmates asked me how I was, and many of them railed against the tyranny of Mr. Falcon ; but I took his part, saying, that he was hasty in this instance, perhaps, but that, generally speaking, he was an excellent and very just officer. Some agreed with me, but others did not. One of them, who was always in disgrace, sneered at me, and said, 'Peter reads the Bible, and knows that if you smite one cheek, he must offer the other. Now, I'll answer for it, if I pull his right ear, he will offer me his left.' So saying, he lugged me by the ear, upon which I knocked him down for his trouble. The berth was then cleared away for a fight, and in a quarter of an hour my opponent gave in ; but I suffered a little, and had a very black eye. I had hardly time to wash myself and change my shirt, which was bloody, when I was summoned on the quarter-deck. When I arrived, I found Mr. Falcon walking up and down. He looked very hard at me, but did not ask me any questions as to the cause of my unusual appearance.

'Mr. Simple,' said he, 'I sent for you to beg your pardon for my behaviour to you last night,

which was not only very hasty but very unjust. I find that you were not to blame for the loss of the men.'

I felt very sorry for him when I heard him speak so handsomely ; and, to make his mind more easy, I told him that, although I certainly was not to blame for the loss of those two men, still I had done wrong in permitting Hickman to leave the boat ; and that had not the sergeant picked him up, I should have come off without him, and therefore I *did* deserve the punishment which I had received.

'Mr. Simple,' replied Mr. Falcon, 'I respect you, and admire your feelings : still, I was to blame, and it is my duty to apologize. Now go down below. I would have requested the pleasure of your company to dinner, but I perceive that something else has occurred, which, under any other circumstances, I would have inquired into, but at present I shall not.'

I touched my hat and went below. In the meantime, O'Brien had been made acquainted with the occasion of the quarrel, which he did not fail to explain to Mr. Falcon, who, O'Brien declared, 'was not the least bit in the world angry with me for what had occurred.' Indeed, after that, Mr. Falcon always treated me with the greatest kindness, and employed me on every duty which he considered of consequence. He was a sincere friend ; for he did not allow me to neglect my duty, but, at the same time, treated me with consideration and confidence.

The marine officer came on board very angry

at being left behind, and talked about a court-martial on me for disrespect, and neglect of stores entrusted to my charge ; but O'Brien told me not to mind him, or what he said. ' It's my opinion, Peter, that the gentleman has eaten no small quantity of *flapdoodle* in his lifetime.'

' What's that, O'Brien ? ' replied I ; ' I never heard of it.'

' Why, Peter,' rejoined he, ' it's the stuff they *feed fools on.*'

CHAPTER XXIX

A long conversation with Mr. Chucks—The advantage of having a prayer-book in your pocket—We run down the Trades—Swinburne, the quarter-master, and his yarns—The captain falls sick.

THE next day the captain came on board with sealed orders, with directions not to open them until off Ushant. In the afternoon we weighed and made sail. It was a fine northerly wind, and the Bay of Biscay was smooth. We bore up, set all the studding-sails, and ran along at the rate of eleven miles an hour. As I could not appear on the quarter-deck, I was put down on the sick-list. Captain Savage, who was very particular, asked what was the matter with me. The surgeon replied, 'An inflamed eye.' The captain asked no more questions; and I took care to keep out of his way. I walked in the evening on the forecastle, when I renewed my intimacy with Mr. Chucks, the boatswain, to whom I gave a full narrative of all my adventures in France. 'I have been ruminating, Mr. Simple,' said he, 'how such a stripling as you could have gone through so much fatigue, and now I know how it is. It is *blood*, Mr. Simple—all blood—you are descended from good blood; and there's as much difference between nobility and the lower classes, as there is between a racer and a cart-horse.'

‘I cannot agree with you, Mr. Chucks. Common people are quite as brave as those who are well-born. You do not mean to say that you are not brave—that the seamen on board this ship are not brave?’

‘No, no, Mr. Simple ; but as I observed about myself, my mother was a woman who could not be trusted, and there is no saying who was my father ; and she was a very pretty woman to boot, which levels all distinctions for the moment. As for the seamen, God knows, I should do them an injustice if I did not acknowledge that they were as brave as lions. But there are two kinds of bravery, Mr. Simple—the bravery of the moment, and the courage of bearing up for a long while. Do you understand me?’

‘I think I do ; but still do not agree with you. Who will bear more fatigue than our sailors?’

‘Yes, yes, Mr. Simple, that is because they are *endured* to it from their hard life : but if the common sailors were all such little thread-papers as you, and had been brought up so carefully, they would not have gone through all you have. That’s my opinion, Mr. Simple,—there’s nothing like *blood*.’

‘I think, Mr. Chucks, you carry your ideas on that subject too far.’

‘I do not, Mr. Simple ; and I think, moreover, that he who has more to lose than another will always strive more. Now a common man only fights for his own credit ; but when a man is descended from a long line of people famous in history, and has a coat *in* arms, criss-crossed,

and stuck all over with lions and unicorns to support the dignity of—why, has he not to fight for the credit of all his ancestors, whose names would be disgraced if he didn't behave well ? ’

‘ I agree with you, Mr. Chucks, in the latter remark, to a certain extent.’

‘ Ah ! Mr. Simple, we never know the value of good descent when we have it, but it's when we cannot get it, that we can *'preciate* it. I wish I had been born a nobleman—I do, by heavens ! ’ and Mr. Chucks slapped his fist against the funnel, so as to make it ring again. ‘ Well, Mr. Simple,’ continued he, after a pause, ‘ it is however a great comfort to me that I have parted company with that fool, Mr. Muddle, with his twenty-six thousand and odd years, and that old woman, Dispart, the gunner. You don't know how those two men used to fret me ; it was very silly, but I couldn't help it. Now the warrant officers of this ship appear to be very respectable, quiet men, who know their duty, and attend to it, and are not too familiar, which I hate and detest. You went home to your friends, of course, when you arrived in England ? ’

‘ I did, Mr. Chucks, and spent some days with my grandfather, Lord Privilege, whom you say you once met at dinner.’

‘ Well, and how was the old gentleman ? ’ inquired the boatswain with a sigh.

‘ Very well, considering his age.’

‘ Now do, pray, Mr. Simple, tell me all about it ; from the time that the servants met you at the door until you went away. Describe to me

the house and all the rooms, for I like to hear of all these things, although I can never see them again.'

To please Mr. Chucks, I entered into a full detail, which he listened to very attentively, until it was late, and then, with difficulty would he permit me to leave off, and go down to my hammock.

The next day, rather a singular circumstance occurred. One of the midshipmen was mast-headed by the second lieutenant, for not waiting on deck until he was relieved. He was down below when he was sent for, and expecting to be punished from what the quarter-master told him, he thrust the first book into his jacket-pocket which he could lay his hand on, to amuse himself at the mast-head, and then ran on deck. As he surmised, he was immediately ordered aloft. He had not been there more than five minutes, when a sudden squall carried away the main-top-gallant mast, and away he went flying over to leeward, (for the wind had shifted, and the yards were now braced up). Had he gone overboard, as he could not swim, he would in all probability have been drowned; but the book in his pocket brought him up in the jaws of the fore-brace block, where he hung until taken out by the main-topmen. Now it so happened that it was a prayer-book which he had laid hold of in his hurry, and those who were superstitious declared it was all owing to his having taken a religious book with him. I did not think so, as any other book would have answered the purpose quite as well: still the

midshipman himself thought so, and it was productive of good, as he was a sad scamp, and behaved much better afterwards.

But I had nearly forgotten to mention a circumstance which occurred on the day of our sailing, which will be eventually found to have had a great influence upon my after life. It was this. I received a letter from my father, evidently written in great vexation and annoyance, informing me that my uncle, whose wife I have already mentioned had two daughters, and was again expected to be confined, had suddenly broken up his housekeeping, discharged every servant, and proceeded to Ireland under an assumed name. No reason had been given for this unaccountable proceeding ; and not even my grandfather, or any of the members of the family, had had notice of his intention. Indeed, it was by mere accident that his departure was discovered, about a fortnight after it had taken place. My father had taken a great deal of pains to find out where he was residing ; but although my uncle was traced to Cork, from that town all clue was lost, but still it was supposed, from inquiries, that he was not very far from thence. ‘ Now,’ observed my father, in his letter, ‘ I cannot help surmising, that my brother, in his anxiety to retain the advantages of the title to his own family, has resolved to produce to the world a spurious child as his own, by some contrivance or another. His wife’s health is very bad, and she is not likely to have a large family. Should the one now expected prove a daughter, there is little chance of his

ever having another ; and I have no hesitation in declaring it my conviction that the measure has been taken with a view of defrauding you of your chance of eventually being called to the House of Lords.'

I showed this letter to O'Brien, who, after reading it over two or three times, gave his opinion that my father was right in his conjectures. 'Depend upon it, Peter, there's foul play intended, that is, if foul play is rendered necessary.'

'But, O'Brien, I cannot imagine why, if my uncle has no son of his own, he should prefer acknowledging a son of any other person's instead of his own nephew.'

'But I can, Peter : your uncle is not a man likely to live very long, as you know. The doctor says that with his short neck, his life is not worth two years' purchase. Now if he had a son, consider that his daughters would be much better off, and much more likely to get married ; besides, there are many reasons which I won't talk about now, because it's no use making you think your uncle to be a scoundrel. But I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll go down to my cabin directly, and write to Father M'Grath, telling him the whole affair, and desiring him to ferret him out, and watch him narrowly, and I'll bet you a dozen of claret, that in less than a week, he'll find him out, and will dog him to the last. He'll get hold of his Irish servants, and you little know the power that a priest has in our country. Now give the description as well as you can of your uncle's

appearance, also of that of his wife, and the number of their family, and their ages. Father M'Grath must have all the particulars, and then let him alone for doing what is needful.'

I complied with O'Brien's directions as well as I could, and he wrote a very long letter to Father M'Grath, which was sent on shore by a careful hand. I answered my father's letter, and then thought no more about the matter.

Our sealed orders were opened, and proved our destination to be the West Indies, as we expected. We touched at Madeira to take in some wine for the ship's company ; but as we only remained one day, we were not permitted to go on shore. Fortunate indeed would it have been if we had never gone there ; for the day after, our captain, who had dined with the consul, was taken alarmingly ill. From the symptoms, the surgeon dreaded that he had been poisoned by something which he had eaten, and which most probably had been cooked in a copper vessel not properly tinned. We were all very anxious that he should recover ; but, on the contrary, he appeared to grow worse and worse every day, wasting away, and dying, as they say, by inches. At last he was put in his cot, and never rose from it again. This melancholy circumstance, added to the knowledge that we were proceeding to an unhealthy climate, caused a gloom throughout the ship ; and, although the trade wind carried us along bounding over the bright blue sea—although the weather was now warm, yet not too warm—although the sun rose in splen-

dour, and all was beautiful and cheering, the state of the captain's health was a check to all mirth. Every one trod the deck softly, and spoke in a low voice, that he might not be disturbed ; all were anxious to have the morning report of the surgeon, and our conversation was generally upon the sickly climate, the yellow fever, of death, and the palisades where they buried us. Swinburne, the quarter-master, was in my watch, and as he had been long in the West Indies, I used to obtain all the information from him that I could.

The old fellow had a secret pleasure in frightening me as much as he could. ' Really, Mr. Simple, you ax so many questions,' he would say, as I accosted him while he was at his station at the *conn*, ' I wish you wouldn't ax so many questions, and make yourself uncomfortable—"steady so"—"steady it is" ; with regard to Yellow Jack, as we calls the yellow fever, it's a devil incarnate, that's sartain—you're well and able to take your allowance in the morning, and dead as a herring 'fore night. First comes a bit of a headache—you goes to the doctor, who bleeds you like a pig—then you go out of your senses—then up comes the black vomit, and then it's all over with you, and you go to the land-crabs, who pick your bones as clean and as white as a sea elephant's tooth. But there be one thing to be said in favour of Yellow Jack, a'ter all. You dies *straight*, like a gentleman—not cribbled up like a snow-fish, chucked out on the ice of the river St. Lawrence, with your knees up to your nose, or your toes

stuck into your arm-pits, as does take place in some of your foreign complaints ; but straight, quite straight, and limber, like a *gentleman*. Still Jack is a little mischievous, that's sartain. In the Euridiscy we had as fine a ship's company as was ever piped aloft,—“ Steady, star-board my man, you're half a pint off your course ” ;—we dropped our anchor in Port Royal, and we thought that there was mischief brewing, for thirty-eight sharks followed the ship into the harbour, and played about us day and night. I used to watch them during the night watch, as their fins, above water, skimmed along, leaving a trail of light behind them ; and the second night I said to the sentry abaft, as I was looking at them smelling under the counter—“ Soldier,” says I, “ them sharks are mustering under the orders of Yellow Jack ” ; and I no sooner mentioned Yellow Jack, than the sharks gave a frisky plunge, every one of them, as much as to say, “ Yes, so we are, d—n your eyes.” The soldier was so frightened that he would have fallen overboard, if I hadn't caught him by the scruff of the neck, for he was standing on the top of the taffrail. As it was, he dropped his musket over the stern, which the sharks dashed at from every quarter, making the sea look like fire—and he had it charged to his wages, 1*l.* 16*s.* I think. However, the fate of his musket gave him an idea of what would have happened to him, if he had fallen in instead of it—and he never got on the taffrail again. “ Steady, port—mind your helm, Smith—you can listen to my yarn all the same.”

Well, Mr. Simple, Yellow Jack came, sure enough. First the purser was called to account for all his roguery. We didn't care much about the land-crabs eating him, who had made so many poor dead men chew tobacco, cheating their wives and relations, or Greenwich Hospital, as it might happen. Then went two of the middies, just about your age, Mr. Simple : they, poor fellows, went off in a sad hurry ; then went the master—and so it went on, till at last we had no more nor sixty men left in the ship. The captain died last, and then Yellow Jack had filled his maw, and left the rest of us alone. As soon as the captain died, all the sharks left the ship, and we never saw any more of them.'

Such were the yarns told to me and the other midshipmen during the night watches ; and I can assure the reader, that they gave us no small alarm. Every day that we worked our day's work, and found ourselves so much nearer to the islands, did we feel as if we were so much nearer to our graves. I once spoke to O'Brien about it, and he laughed. 'Peter,' says he, 'fear kills more people than the yellow fever, or any other complaint in the West Indies. Swinburne is an old rogue, and only laughing at you. The devil's not half so black as he's painted—nor the yellow fever half so yellow, I presume.' We were now fast nearing the island of Barbadoes, the weather was beautiful, the wind always fair ; the flying-fish rose in shoals, startled by the foaming seas, which rolled away, and roared from the bows as our swift frigate cleaved through the water ; the porpoises

played about us in thousands—the bonetas and dolphins at one time chased the flying-fish, and, at others, appeared to be delighted in keeping company with the rapid vessel. Everything was beautiful, and we all should have been happy, had it not been for the state of Captain Savage, in the first place, who daily became worse and worse, and from the dread of the hell which we were about to enter through such a watery paradise. Mr. Falcon, who was in command, was grave and thoughtful; he appeared indeed to be quite miserable at the chance which would ensure his own promotion. In every attention and every care that could be taken to ensure quiet, and afford relief to the captain, he was unremitting; the offence of making a noise was now, with him, a greater crime than drunkenness, or even mutiny. When within three days' sail of Barbadoes, it fell almost calm, and the captain became much worse; and now, for the first time, did we behold the great white shark of the Atlantic. There are several kinds of sharks, but the most dangerous are the great white shark and the ground shark. The former grows to an enormous length—the latter is seldom very long, not more than twelve feet, but spreads to a great breadth. We could not hook the sharks as they played around us, for Mr. Falcon would not permit it, lest the noise of hauling them on board should disturb the captain. A breeze again sprang up. In two days we were close to the island, and the men were desired to look out for the land.

CHAPTER XXX

Death of Captain Savage—His funeral—Specimen of true Barbadian born—Sucking the monkey—Effects of a hurricane.

THE next morning, having hove-to part of the night, land was discovered on the bow, and was reported by the mast-head man at the same moment that the surgeon came up and announced the death of our noble captain. Although it had been expected for the last two or three days, the intelligence created a heavy gloom throughout the ship ; the men worked in silence, and spoke to one another in whispers. Mr. Falcon was deeply affected, and so were we all. In the course of the morning, we ran into the island, and, unhappy as I was, I never can forget the sensation of admiration which I felt on closing with Needham Point to enter Carlisle Bay. The beach of such a pure dazzling white, backed by the tall, green cocoa-nut trees, waving their spreading heads to the fresh breeze, the dark blue of the sky, and the deeper blue of the transparent sea, occasionally varied into green as we passed by the coral rocks which threw their branches out from the bottom—the town opening to our view by degrees, houses after houses so neat, with their green jalousies, dotting the landscape, the fort with the colours flying, troops of officers riding down, a busy

population of all colours, relieved by the whiteness of their dress. Altogether the scene realized my first ideas of fairy land, for I thought I had never witnessed anything so beautiful. 'And can this be such a dreadful place as it is described?' thought I. The sails were clewed up, the anchor was dropped to the bottom, and a salute from the ship, answered by the forts, added to the effect of the scene. The sails were furled, the boats lowered down, the boatswain squared the yards from the jolly-boat a-head. Mr. Falcon dressed, and his boat being manned, went on shore with the despatches. Then, as soon as the work was over, a new scene of delight presented itself to the sight of midshipmen who had been so long upon his Majesty's allowance. These were the boats, which crowded round the ship, loaded with baskets of bananas, oranges, shaddocks, soursops, and every other kind of tropical fruit, fried flying-fish, eggs, fowls, milk, and everything which could tempt a poor boy after a long sea voyage. The watch being called, down we all hastened into the boats, and returned loaded with treasures, which we soon contrived to make disappear. After stowing away as much fruit as would have sufficed for a dessert to a dinner given to twenty people in England, I returned on deck.

There was no other man-of-war in the bay ; but my attention was directed to a beautiful little vessel, a schooner, whose fairy form contrasted strongly with a West India trader which lay close to her. All of a sudden, as I was looking at her beautiful outline, a yell rose from

her which quite startled me, and immediately afterwards her deck was covered with nearly two hundred naked figures with woolly heads, chattering and grinning at each other. She was a Spanish slaver, which had been captured, and had arrived the evening before. The slaves were still on board, waiting the orders of the governor. They had been on deck about ten minutes, when three or four men, with large panama straw hats on their heads, and long rattans in their hands, jumped upon the gunnel, and in a few seconds drove them all down below. I then turned round, and observed a black woman who had just climbed up the side of the frigate. O'Brien was on deck, and she walked up to him in the most consequential way.

'How do you do, sar? Very happy you come back again,' said she to O'Brien.

'I'm very well, I thank you, ma'am,' replied O'Brien, 'and I hope to go back the same; but never having put my foot into this bay before, you have the advantage of me.'

'Nebber here before, so help me Gad! me tink I know you—me tink I recollect your handsome face—I Lady Rodney, sar. Ah, piccanninny buccra! how you do?' said she, turning round to me. 'Me hope to hab the honour to wash for you, sar,' curtsyng to O'Brien.

'What do you charge in this place?'

'All the same price, one bit a piece.'

'What do you call a bit?' inquired I.

'A bit, lilly massa?—what you call um *bit*? Dem four *sharp shins* to a pictareen.'

Our deck was now enlivened by several army officers, besides gentlemen residents, who came off to hear the news. Invitations to the mess and to the houses of the gentlemen, followed, and as they departed, Mr. Falcon returned on board. He told O'Brien and the other officers, that the admiral and squadron were expected in a few days, and that we were to remain in Carlisle Bay, and refit immediately.

But although the fright about the yellow fever had considerably subsided in our breasts, the remembrance that our poor captain was lying dead in the cabin was constantly obtruding. All that night the carpenters were up making his coffin, for he was to be buried the next day. The body is never allowed to remain many hours unburied in the tropical climates, where putrefaction is so rapid. The following morning the men were up at daylight, washing the decks and putting the ship in order ; they worked willingly, and yet with a silent decorum which showed what their feelings were. Never were the decks better cleaned, never were the ropes more carefully *flemished* down ; the hammocks were stowed in their white cloths, the yards carefully squared, and the ropes hauled taut. At eight o'clock the colours and pennant were hoisted half-mast high. The men were then ordered down to breakfast, and to clean themselves. During the time that the men were at breakfast, all the officers went into the cabin to take a last farewell look at our gallant captain. He appeared to have died without pain, and there was a

beautiful tranquillity in his face ; but even already a change had taken place, and we perceived the necessity of his being buried so soon. We saw him placed in his coffin, and then quitted the cabin without speaking to each other. When the coffin was nailed down, it was brought up by the barge's crew to the quarter-deck, and laid upon the gratings amidships, covered over with the Union Jack. The men came up from below without waiting for the pipe, and a solemnity appeared to pervade every motion. Order and quiet were universal, out of respect to the deceased. When the boats were ordered to be manned, the men almost appeared to steal into them. The barge received the coffin, which was placed in the stern-sheets. The other boats then hauled up, and received the officers, marines, and sailors, who were to follow the procession. When all was ready, the barge was shoved off by the bow men, the crew dropped their oars into the water without a splash, and pulled the *minute stroke* ; the other boats followed, and as soon as they were clear of the ship, the minute guns boomed along the smooth surface of the bay from the opposite side of the ship, while the yards were topped to starboard and to port, the ropes were slackened and hung in bights, so as to give the idea of distress and neglect. At the same time, a dozen or more of the men who had been ready, dropped over the sides of the ship in different parts, and with their cans of paint and brushes in a few minutes effaced the whole of the broad white riband which marked the

beautiful run of the frigate, and left her all black and in deep mourning. The guns from the forts now responded to our own. The merchant ships lowered their colours, and the men stood up respectfully with their hats off, as the procession moved slowly to the landing-place. The coffin was borne to the burial-ground by the crew of the barge, followed by Mr. Falcon as chief mourner, all the officers of the ship who could be spared, one hundred of the seamen walking two and two, and the marines with their arms reversed. The *cortége* was joined by the army officers, while the troops lined the streets and the bands played the dead march. The service was read, the volleys were fired over the grave, and with oppressed feelings we returned to the boats and pulled on board.

It then appeared to me, and to a certain degree I was correct, that as soon as we had paid our last respect to his remains, we had also forgotten our grief. The yards were again squared, the ropes hauled taut, working dresses resumed, and all was activity and bustle. The fact is, that sailors and soldiers have no time for lamentation, and running as they do from clime to clime, so does scene follow scene in the same variety and quickness. In a day or two, the captain appeared to be, although he was not, forgotten. Our first business was to *water* the ship by rafting and towing off the casks. I was in charge of the boat again, with Swinburne as coxswain. As we pulled in, there were a number of negroes bathing in the surf, bob-

bing their woolly heads under it, as it rolled into the beach. 'Now, Mr. Simple,' said Swinburne, 'see how I'll make them *niggers* scamper.' He then stood up in the stern-sheets, and pointing with his finger, roared out, 'A shark ! a shark !' Away started all the bathers for the beach, puffing and blowing, from their dreaded enemy ; nor did they stop to look for him until they were high and dry out of his reach. Then, when we all laughed, they called us '*all the hangman tiefs*,' and every other opprobrious name which they could select from their vocabulary. I was very much amused with this scene, and as much afterwards with the negroes who crowded round us when we landed. They appeared such merry fellows, always laughing, chattering, singing, and showing their white teeth. One fellow danced round us, snapping his fingers, and singing songs without beginning or end. 'Eh massa, what you say now? Me no slave—true Barbadian born, sir. Eh !

'Nebba see de day
 Dat Rodney run away,
 Nebba see um night
 Dat Rodney cannot fight.

'Massa, me free man, sar. Suppose you give me pictareen, drink massa health.

'Nebba see de day, boy,
 Pompey lickum de Cæsar.

'Eh ! and you nebba see de day dat de Grass-hopper run on de Warrington.'

'Out of the way, you nigger !' cried one of the men who was rolling down a cask.

‘ Eh ! who you call nigger ? Me free man,
and true Barbadian born. Go along, you man-
of-war man.

‘ Man-of-war, buccra,
Man-of-war, buccra,
He de boy for me ;
Sodger buccra,
Sodger buccra,
Nebba, nebba do,
Nebba, nebba do for me ;
Sodger give one shilling,
Sailor give me two.

‘ Massa, now suppose you give me only one
pictareen now. You really handsome young
gentleman.’

‘ Now, just walk off,’ said Swinburne, lifting
up a stick he found on the beach.

‘ Eh ; walk off.

‘ Nebba see the day, boy,
’Badian run away, boy.

‘ Go, do your work, sar. Why you talk to me ?
Go, work, sar. I free man, and real Barbadian
born.

‘ Negro on de shore
See de ship come in,
De buccra come on shore,
Wid de hand up to the chin ;
Man-of-war buccra,
Man-of-war buccra,
He de boy for me,
Man-of-war, buccra,
Man-of-war, buccra,
Gib pictareen to me.’

At this moment my attention was directed
to another negro, who lay on the beach, rolling

and foaming at the mouth, apparently in a fit. 'What's the matter with that fellow?' said I to the same negro who continued close to me, notwithstanding Swinburne's stick. 'Eh! call him Sam Slack, Massa. He ab um *tic tic* fit.' And such was apparently the case. 'Stop, me cure him'; and he snatched the stick out of Swinburne's hand, and running up to the man, who continued to roll on the beach, commenced belabouring him without mercy. 'Eh, Sambo!' cried he at last, quite out of breath, 'you no better yet—try again.' He recommenced, until at last the man got up and ran away as fast as he could. Now, whether the man was shamming, or whether it was real *tic tic*, or epileptic fit, I know not, but I never heard of such a cure for it before. I threw the fellow half a pictareen, as much for the amusement he had afforded me as to get rid of him. 'Tanky, massa; now man-of-war man, here de tick for you again to keep off all de dam niggers.' So saying, he handed the stick to Swinburne, made a polite bow, and departed. We were, however, soon surrounded by others, particularly some dingy ladies, with baskets of fruit, and who, as they said, 'sell ebery ting.' I perceived that my sailors were very fond of cocoa-nut milk, which, being a harmless beverage, I did not object to their purchasing from these ladies, who had chiefly cocoa-nuts in their baskets. As I had never tasted it, I asked them what it was, and bought a cocoa-nut. I selected the largest. 'No, massa, dat not good for you. Better one for buccra officer.' I then

selected another, but the same objection was made. ‘No, massa, dis very fine milk. Very good for de tomac.’ I drank off the milk from the holes on the top of the cocoa-nut, and found it very refreshing. As for the sailors, they appeared very fond of it indeed. But I very soon found that if good for de tomac, it was not very good for the head, as my men, instead of rolling the casks, began to roll themselves in all directions, and when it was time to go off to dinner, most of them were dead drunk at the bottom of the boat. They insisted that it was the *sun* which affected them. Very hot it certainly was, and I believed them at first, when they were only giddy ; but I was convinced to the contrary when I found that they became insensible ; yet how they had procured the liquor was to me a mystery. When I came on board, Mr. Falcon, who, although acting captain, continued his duties as first lieutenant almost as punctually as before, asked how it was that I had allowed my men to get so tipsy. I assured him that I could not tell, that I had never allowed one to leave the watering-place, or to buy any liquor ; the only thing that they had to drink was a little cocoa-nut milk, which, as it was so very hot, I thought there could be no objection to. Mr. Falcon smiled and said, ‘Mr. Simple, I’m an old stager in the West Indies, and I’ll let you into a secret. Do you know what “*sucking the monkey*” means?’ ‘No, sir.’ ‘Well, then, I’ll tell you ; it is a term used among seamen for drinking *rum* out of *cocoa-nuts*, the milk having been poured out,

and the liquor substituted. Now do you comprehend why your men are tipsy ? ' I stared with all my eyes, for it never would have entered into my head ; and I then perceived why it was that the black woman would not give me the first cocoa-nuts which I had selected. I told Mr. Falcon of this circumstance, who replied, ' Well, it was not your fault, only you must not forget it another time. '

It was my first watch that night, and Swinburne was quarter-master on deck. ' Swinburne, ' said I, ' you have often been in the West Indies before, why did you not tell me that the men were " *sucking the monkey* " when I thought that they were only drinking cocoa-nut milk ? '

Swinburne chuckled, and answered, ' Why, Mr. Simple, d'ye see, it didn't become me as a shipmate to peach. It's but seldom that a poor fellow has an opportunity of making himself a " little happy, " and it would not be fair to take away the chance. I suppose you'll never let them have cocoa-nut milk again ? '

' No, that I will not ; but I cannot imagine what pleasure they can find in getting so tipsy. '

' It's merely because they are not allowed to be so, sir. That's the whole story in few words. '

' Well, I think I could cure them, if I were permitted to try. '

' I should like to hear how you'd manage that, Mr. Simple. '

' Why, I would oblige a man to drink off a half pint of liquor, and then put him by himself. I would not allow him companions to

make merry with so as to make a pleasure of intoxication. I would then wait until next morning when he was sober, and leave him alone with a racking headache until the evening, when I would give him another dose, and so on, forcing him to get drunk until he hated the smell of liquor.'

'Well, Mr. Simple, it might do with some, but many of our chaps would require the dose you mention to be repeated pretty often before it would effect a cure : and what's more, they'd be very willing patients, and make no wry faces at their physic.'

'Well, that might be, but it would cure them at last. But tell me, Swinburne, were you ever in a hurricane ?'

'I've been in everything, Mr. Simple, I believe, except a school, and I never had no time to go there. Do you see that battery at Needham Point ? Well, in the hurricane of '82, them same guns were whirled away by the wind right over to this point here on the opposite side, the sentries in their sentry-boxes after them. Some of the soldiers who faced the wind had their teeth blown down their throats like broken 'baccy pipes, others had their heads turned round like dog vanes ; 'cause they waited for orders to the "*right about face,*" and the whole air was full of young *niggers* blowing about like peelings of *ingons*.'

'You don't suppose I believe all this, Swinburne ?'

'That's as may be, Mr. Simple, but I've told the story so often, that I believe it myself.'

‘ What ship were you in ? ’

‘ In the *Blanche*, Captain Faulkner, who was as fine a fellow as poor Captain Savage whom we buried yesterday ; there could not be a finer than either of them. I was at the taking of the *Pique*, and carried him down below after he had received his mortal wound. We did a pretty thing out here when we took Fort Royal by a *coup-de-main*, which means, boarding from the *main-yard* of the frigate, and dropping from it into the fort. But what’s that under the moon ?—there’s a sail in the offing.’

Swinburne fetched the glass and directed it to the spot. ‘ One, two, three, four. It’s the admiral, sir, and the squadron hove-to for the night. One’s a line-of-battle ship, I’ll swear.’ I examined the vessels, and agreeing with Swinburne, reported them to Mr. Falcon. My watch was then over, and as soon as I was released I went to my hammock.

